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GO WORLD

WINTER 1987-88 NO.50



THE ISHI PRESS



The 1961 Honinbo match: Takagawa v. Sakata

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The cover: Section of a panel from a six-panel painted folding screen from the *nanban-byobu*, literally 'southern barbarians screen', genre. These screens give satirical portrayals of the Westerners who came to Japan to engage in trade in the 16th and 17th centuries. The two Caucasians (Portuguese?) are probably the first to appear in Japanese art playing go. *From the collection of the Tenri Library.*

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Go World 50: The World of Japanese Go

This is the second special issue of Go World. The first was issue No. 5, which commemorated the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Ishi Press. This enlarged issue specifically commemorates the survival of Go World to its 50th issue, but though it will be just a little early, appearing in December 1987, it could also serve to mark the 20th anniversary of Ishi Press, which sent its first book to the printer in January 1968.

Our first special issue was an ordinary issue expanded a little; this time we have attempted to put together a collection of essays and articles which will stand by itself as an introduction to the world of modern Japanese go. For this one issue, we have suspended our usual coverage of the Japanese tournament scene and taken a look instead at the background to the current go scene.

The main focus is on modern go history. First we take a look at a very unusual match played in the 1920's. The featured article of this issue is the first part of a full-scale biography of one of the greatest players of go history, Sakata Eio. Written by Bob Terry, this is the most

ambitious biography of a modern player thus far presented in English. The article on the professional rating tournament, the Oteai, is the most detailed so far presented in any language, Japanese or Western. The group of essays by Nakayama Noriyuki, written with his usual inimitable flair, affords glimpses into the lighter side of go, though 'light' may not be the word for the experiences of Hoshino 9-dan. On the technical side, we take a look at some of the weird and wonderful shapes that can come up at any time in the course of a game. Also, the current go scene is not completely neglected, with the historical articles being balanced by an in-depth coverage of the final of the 2nd Japan-China Super Go series. We also present a game by the strongest Westerner playing go, Michael Redmond, in which he tests his mettle against one of Japan's top players.

We hope that the reader will enjoy the change of pace in this issue. From GW51 on, we will resume our coverage of championship go and our other regular articles, but we will also continue to present as many essays and background articles as we have space for.

Go World News

The Year of Kato: Two More Titles

At the ripe old age of 40, Kato Masao is having one of the best years of his career. He has just won two more title matches, the 12th Meijin and the 35th Oza, so he has maintained his current swag of titles at four and has taken his overall tally to 28.

These days Kato seems to be able to do nothing wrong. In the 12th Meijin title match, he steamrolled the challenger, Rin Kaiho, with four straight wins, while in the 35th Oza title match he bested his most dangerous rival, Cho Chikun, 3-1. This follows his Gosei victory over Cho, his ex-nemesis, by the same margin.

This year's Meijin title match was notable for two firsts. One of them is auspicious: Game One of the match was the first title game to be played in New York City (a detailed report on the staging of the game will appear in our next issue). Playing the game in New York not only



The highlight of one of Kato's best years: defending the Meijin title against Rin,

made a big contribution to gaining publicity for go, it also made the Japanese go public aware of what great strides the game is taking in the United States.

The other first earns the title match a more dubious place in go history: Rin forfeited the third game by playing two moves in a row, the first time this has happened in a title game. On the second day of the game, Rin, who had been down to his last minute of byo-yomi for some time, played the last move before the dinner break and the first move after it, thus producing a rather unusual game record. We will look at this incident in some detail in a later issue; briefly, what happened is that Rin's last move before dinner was a forcing move, giving Kato no choice about his answer. Rin must have continued thinking about the game during dinner, assuming for the purposes of analysis that Kato's answer to the forcing move was already on the board. Unfortunately, it was not yet physically on the board when he played his next move. The strange thing is that Kato answered that move before Rin realized what he had done, so the pressure must have been telling on him too. According to tournament rules, professionals don't get a second chance: an illegal move means an instant forfeit.

The shock must have been all the greater for Rin because this was his best game of the series and he seemed to have a good chance of winning.

The results:

Game 1 (17, 18 Sept.). Kato (B) won by 5½ points. Game 2 (30 Sept., 1 Oct.). Kato (W) won by resig.

Game 3 (7, 8 Oct.). Kato (B) won by forfeit.

Game 4 (21, 22 Oct.). Kato (W) won by 3½ points.

Kato's victory in the 35th Oza title was just as impressive. Though he dropped one game, he played strongly in the other three. He seems to have completely got over his Cho-complex and recently has won almost all his important games with him.

The Oza is Kato's favourite title. With this year's victory, he has now won it six years in a row and eight times overall. This surpasses Sakata's record of seven Oza titles, and in all titles puts him in second place behind Takagawa's nine Honinbo titles. Kato could become the first player to win an open title ten times.



With 8 Oza titles, Kato surpasses Sakata's record.

The results:

Game 1 (10 Sept.). Kato (B) won by resig.

Game 2 (25 Sept.). Kato (W) won by resig.

Game 3 (15 Oct.). Cho (W) won by resig.

Game 4 (4 Nov.). Kato (W) won by resig.

Kisei Challenger: Kato or Otake?

The final to decide the challenger to Kobayashi Kisei will be fought between Kato Masao and Otake Hideo, both of whom are enjoying excellent form this year (Otake's record to 16 November is 24–14).

The full results in the final section of the Kisei title were as follows:

Prelim. round. O Meien beat O Rissei, Awaji b. Hasegawa, Shiraishi b. Sakata.

Quarterfinals. Cho b. O, Otake b. Awaji, Kato b. Yoda, Takemiya b. Shiraishi.

Semifinals. Otake b. Cho (29 Oct.), Kato b. Takemiya (12 Nov.).

3rd Japan–China Super Go Series Now Tied

Japan seemed to be in bad trouble in the 3rd Super Go series, but Yamashiro 9-dan has proved to be the saviour of his team. As reported in our previous issue, Japan was trailing 1–5, mainly because of the valiant efforts of Liu Xiaoguang 8-dan of China, who beat four Japanese players in a row. Liu lost to Ohira Shuzo, who in turn lost to Wang Qun, taking the score to 6–2 in China's favour. At this point Yamashiro made his appearance; he had been having a dismal year, what with his shutout in the Honinbo title match, but he more than made up for that by winning four games in a row to match Liu's performance and level the score. Yamashiro first

43rd Honinbo League (as of 19 November 1987)

Rank	Player	Y	C	R	K.K.	K	O	S	T	Score
1	Yamashiro	—						1	0	1-1
2	Cho Chikun		—		1		0			1-1
3	Rin Kaiho			—	0		0			0-2
4	Kobayashi K.		0	1	—					1-1
5	Kato					—		1	1	2-0
5	Otake		1	1			—			2-0
5	Sato Sunao	0				0		—		0-2
5	Takagi	1				0			—	1-1

Note: Players are ranked according to their results in the previous league.

defeated Wang and Qian 9-dan (these two games were played in Japan on 26 and 28 September), then went on to defeat Rui Naiwei 8-dan, the top Chinese woman player, and Jiang Zhujiu 9-dan, the hero of the first series for China (these two games were played in China on 29 and 31 October).

It will be interesting to see if Yamashiro keeps on winning or if this series, like the first two, ends in a showdown between the rival team captains.

Honinbo and Meijin Leagues

For once Otake is doing well in the Honinbo league. After the first two rounds of the 43rd league, he shares the lead with Kato, having defeated formidable rivals in Cho Chikun and Rin Kaiho. This year the top four players have started badly, so we may see someone different challenging Takemiya in 1988. Of the four new players in the league, Sato Sunao 9-dan (born in February 1924) is making his first appearance. Sato, a leading Kansai Ki-in player, is a noted composer of life-and-death problems, but so far he is having a hard time. His main successes to date have been taking 6th place in the 1st Pro Best Ten in 1964 and earning a place in the 10th (Yomiuri) Meijin League in 1971.

The three vacant places in the 13th Meijin league have been taken by Ishida Yoshio, Ohira Shuzo, and Awaji Shuzo. Ishida is a former Meijin, but this will be his first appearance in the league for nine years. Ohira Shuzo will be making his fifth appearance and Awaji his first. The three join Rin, Kobayashi Koichi, Cho,

Ishida Akira, Takemiya, and Fujisawa Shuko. (Shuko kept his place in the league by winning a playoff with Shiraishi, with whom he tied for 6th place in the 12th league).

Cho Tengen Challenger, Kobayashi Wins 1st Game

This has not been a good year for Cho, but he still has one more chance to take a title. However, Kobayashi Koichi has made a good start in the 13th Tengen title match, winning the first game of the best-of-five.

Cho became the challenger by defeating Kato in the playoff held on 12 October, his only success against Kato this year. Surprisingly, this is Cho's first appearance in the Tengen title match; if he takes the title, he will be the first player to complete a grand slam of all the top seven titles.

Yoda Wins 11th Shinjin-O Title

Yoda Norimoto has once again shown that he is the top player of the new generation by winning the Shinjin-O title for the second year in a row; he also became the first player to win the title three times. This title is restricted to players 7-dan and under, so strong players usually disqualify themselves by moving up the dan ladder, but Yoda got around that by picking up his first title at the age of 16. Since he has only just been promoted to 7-dan, he could extend his record quite a bit.

Strong players always have their share of luck. After winning the first game of the title match with O Meien 7-dan and losing the second, Yoda secured the title by a half-point margin in



Yoda 7-dan

the third game, which was played on 7 September. His loss in the second game put an end to a 20-game winning streak.

The 1987 U.S. Go Congress

The Third U.S. Go Congress, held at Mount Holyoke College from 8 to 16 August, was the biggest, best run, and most successful yet. With a peak attendance of about 250 players and 12 professionals, it was the most impressive event to date in American go history. A great deal of the credit goes to the Congress Director, Bill Saltman, who was assisted by Bob McGuigan, Assistant Director, and Sam Zimmerman and Katherine Wolfthal. The professional visits were skilfully coordinated by Barbara Calhoun.

Eight official tournaments were held during the Congress. The Eastern Championship was won by Kim Dae Yol, who will play the winner of the Western Championship, Xu Chuanzuan, later in the year to determine the National Champion. The winner of the Eastern Contender title, Don Wiener, will play Lim Jung Ho, the Western Contender, to decide the WAGC representative.

Next year's Congress will be held in Berkeley from 29 July to 7 August.

(Adapted from The American Go Newsletter, No. 21. A full report on the Congress will be given in the 1988 Ranka Yearbook, due to be published early in 1988.)

1988 European Go Congress

The 32nd European Go Congress will be held in Hamburg from 23 July to 6 August 1988. There

will be the usual full schedule of tournaments for human participants, including a special tournament for children, and also 9x9 and 19x19 computer championships. Attractive cash prizes will be awarded in all tournaments.

The congress fees are DM 120 (two weeks, all tournaments), DM 75 (one week, including the Weekend Tournament), and DM 20 for the Weekend Tournament. The first two fees are reduced to DM 100 and 60 respectively if registration is completed before the end of May 1988 and half the fee has been transferred to: Deutscher Go-Bund e.V., Postgiro Hamburg, Acc. No. 599300-207. Applications and enquiries should be addressed to:

Deutscher Go-Bund e. V.
Postfach 605454
D-5000 Hamburg 60.

1st World Open Go Tournament

Fujitsu, a leading computer manufacturer, is planning to sponsor the first world open go championship, open to both professionals and amateurs. Thanks to the generous prize money, it is expected that the world's top players will all compete, so for the first time it will be possible to establish just who is the number one player in the world.

Participating in the first tournament, to be held from April to August 1988, will be 16 players from 6 bodies, as listed below.

Nihon Ki-in: 8 players
Kansai Ki-in: 2
Chinese Weiqi Association: 2
Korean Baduk Association: 2
European Go Federation: 1
American Go Association: 1.

First prize is ¥15,000,000 (nearly \$110,000) and second prize is ¥7,000,000. Even players who lose in the first round will receive a game fee of ¥300,000. The tournament will be a four-round knockout, played at the Nihon Ki-in in Tokyo at the rate of one round a month.

6th Women's Honinbo Title

The challenger to Ogawa Tomoko 4-dan is the former title-holder, Kusunoki Teruko 7-dan. Ogawa has started well by winning the first game. Kusunoki has won this title twice and played in five of the six title matches. Last year she lost 0-2 to Ogawa.

2nd Japan-China Super Go

Despite a disastrous setback in the middle of the series, when Japan won five games in a row, the 2nd Japan-China Super Go series has ended like the first in a triumph for China, or, more accurately, for one Chinese player, the team captain Nie Weiping. Nie single-handedly rescued his team from the brink of defeat by winning five games in a row, besting some of the top names in Japanese go in the process. This is the second time that Nie has pulled off such a remarkable recovery for his country: last year he only had to win three in a row, but his opponents were Kobayashi Koichi, Kato, and Fujisawa Shuko. This time he rounded off the series with wins

Nie triumphs yet again.

IC: Congratulations. I imagine that the sake tasted good last night.

Nie: Yes. Thank you.

IC: When we interviewed you a while ago, you had just beaten Kataoka, Yamashiro, and Sakai, thus keeping alive the hopes of your team, and you said: 'I was lucky. I can't believe it.' How do you feel now that you've gone on to beat Takemiya and Otake?

Nie: I was lucky. I just can't believe it.

IC: The same as before . . . (laughter) But luck alone can't explain it. Didn't you feel any pressure in the final game?

Nie: There was tremendous pressure. I think it must have been the same for Otake. That's why both of us made slips.

IC: I'd like to ask your team leader, Mr. Hao, Vice President of the Chinese Weiqi Association, a question. What does Nie's strength consist in?

Hao: He has a strong fighting nature. Most people are unable to display their full strength under pressure, but Nie is the opposite. He loves playing games where there's a lot of pressure. The greater the pressure the stronger he plays.

IC: Nie, how did you get strong?

Nie: I'm not at all strong even now. I learned go when I was a child. My father often played go with a friend and I learnt to play naturally by watching them. After that I studied like crazy. I've probably studied more than anyone else in China. When I wasn't sleeping or eating, I was studying go. Our young players now study a lot,

against Takemiya and Otake. This performance – eight wins in a row in the Super Go Series – makes him the unrivalled champion of international go. The 3rd series is already well under way; it will be interesting to see how the Japanese do – Takemiya and Kato were selected for the team again to give them a chance to take revenge.

The day after the series ended, Igo Club interviewed the hero of the Chinese victory. The Igo Club reporter is Murakami Akira. Following the interview is a roundtable discussion of the final game and a brief commentary on the Nie-Takemiya game.



but not the way I did.

IC: People talk about the competitive element and the artistic element in go – for example, in Japan Fujisawa Shuko and Takemiya are the type of players who attach importance to the artistic side. What about you?

Nie (without hesitation): The competitive side.

IC: The 3rd Japan-China Super Go series will start immediately. In what frame of mind are you approaching it?

Nie: Even though we won the 1st and 2nd series, the Japanese side has a lot of depth.

The Japanese have changed the members of the team, yet the Chinese side is the same. In this respect, I feel there's a gap between Japan and China, so we have to try harder than ever.

The only thing is that I'm a little tired, so I want our younger players to fight harder.

IC: Would you be kind enough to give us your impressions of the go style of each of the members of the Chinese team? Japan's been having a hard time of it, so this might help us. (laughter) First, Yang . . .

Nie: Power go. She beat me in the National Championship. By power.

IC: Liu?

Nie: He's also a strong fighter. His fuseki may be a little slack. Wang plays a well-balanced game. Xian is territorial and plays a shinogi style. He is the Cho-Kobayashi type. But recently he's been trying to go for thickness a little. Jui is the never-say-die type. In a game in last year's New Physical Education Cup I was bested by her tenacity.

IC: And Jiang, who beat five Japanese players in the last series?

Nie: He plays power go but a different kind of power from Liu. He's also good at fuseki. Tsao's game is well balanced. Recently he's enjoyed particularly good form.

IC: Ma has a very good reputation in Japan.

Nie: He has a lot of talent. His game has nice balance.

IC: His performance in the Super series hasn't been quite up to expectation.

Nie: That's not true. He beat Kobayashi Satoru and losing to Kataoka is something that couldn't be helped. Kataoka's strong.

IC: Finally, what about your own go?

Nie: If I had to make a choice, I'd say that I prefer going for thickness, but I also aim for territorial balance. Personally I think that my game is a little like Otake's, but . . .

IC: Mr. Hao, what do you think is the significance of the Japan-China matches?

Hao: Thanks to the generous instruction by Japanese players, we have managed to catch up with Japan. It is my hope that the stimulus from future competition will result in raising the level of go in both countries.

Nie: I would like to see much, much more exchange between the two countries. On conditions of equality in all respects. We are ready

2nd Japan—China Super Go

Kusunoki (J) lost to Rui Naiwei (C), who then beat Morita 3-dan, but lost to Imamura 7-dan. Imamura also beat Zhang Xuan 6-dan of China, but lost to Qian 7-dan. Kobayashi Satoru 8-dan then beat five Chinese players in a row: Qian, Shao 7-dan, Tsao 9-dan, Jiang 8-dan, and Liu 8-dan. He lost to Ma 9-dan, who in turn lost to Kataoka 8-dan. Nie then beat Kataoka, Yamashiro, Sakai, Takemiya, and Otake.



Hao Kechiang, Vice President of the Chinese Weiqi Association

for this on the Chinese side.

Hao: It would be nice if we could have a tournament to decide the top player in the world. No one knows yet just who is the number one player in the world.

IC: A tournament to find the number one player — that sounds like a good idea. Thank you both very much for your time.

Otake v. Nie: A game played under relentless pressure

Three players from the Japanese side got together to go over the final game and to try to work out just what went wrong with their team. Again the interviewer for Igo Club is Murakami Akira.

Falling to pieces in the endgame

IC: The 3rd Japan—China Super Go series has already begun, but we would like to ask you to review the 2nd series and to tell us about your hopes for the 3rd series. How about starting



Otake explaining what went wrong.

with the final game of the 2nd series?

Kobayashi Satoru: Let's take it first — it's better to forget about a loss as soon as possible.

IC: It was a close game, full of suspense.

Otake: I played a poor game. I'm ashamed.

Kato: But it was a difficult contest in the endgame, wasn't it?

Otake: I played a number of bad moves in succession. I might have had a chance of winning.

IC: I interviewed Nie the day after the game, and according to him he might have lost if you'd played right.

Otake: I'd lost my composure a little at the end.

Kobayashi: Well then, shall I play out the moves?

White: Otake Hideo 9-dan

Black: Nie Weiping 9-dan

Played on 30 April 1987 at the Shigaku Kaikan, Ichigaya, Tokyo.

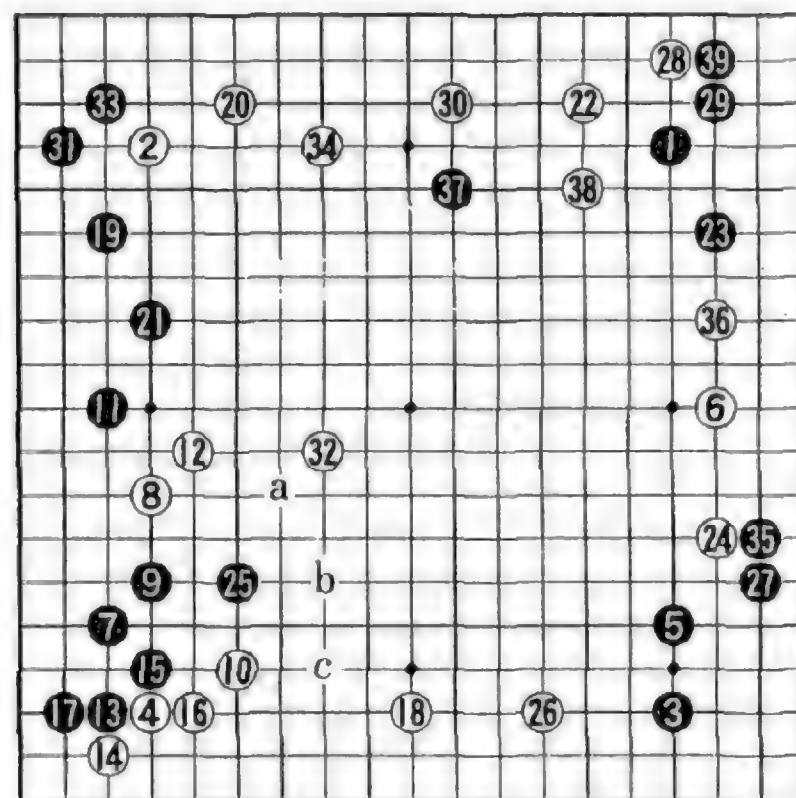


Figure 1 (1 – 39)

Figure 1 (1 – 39). Nie's solid start

IC: Could you tell us anything you've noticed about Nie's style?

Otake: He's a skilful strategist. There's no real feeling of speed about his fuseki. Take Black 25,

for example. He's the type who plays solidly, then brings his strength to bear later.

Kato: He plays a thick game.

Otake: White 32 was too facile. I should have played the knight's move at 'a', inducing Black 'b', then defended at 'c' — this is a better flow.

Kato: Up to 39 White also gets a satisfactory fuseki.

Otake: Up to this point I thought that I had a promising fuseki. Wouldn't you say that Black's groups are a little overconcentrated? Six stones in the bottom left corner and five on the top left — yet he's got no territory to speak of.

Kato: Black 37 is an aggressive move.

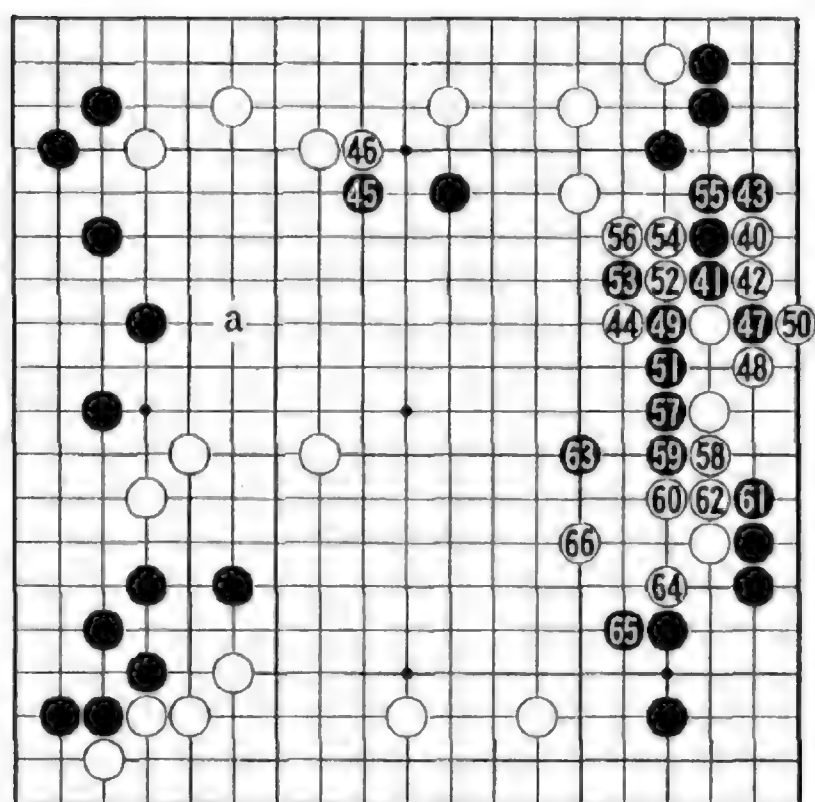
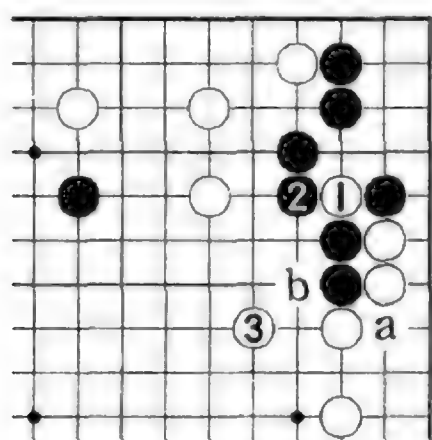


Figure 2 (40 - 66)



Dia. 1

Figure 2 (40 - 66). *Unthinking play*

Otake: For 40, capping at 'a' would have been better. Glaring threateningly at Black without actually doing anything is best.

IC: That's the Otake style, I hear — throwing a scare into the opponent by not doing anything.

Kato: You should have made a cut at 1 in Dia. 1 before playing 44.

Otake: That's so right. If only I'd made the cut, it would have been perfect.

Kobayashi: Because if Black cuts at 'a', White ataris at 'b'.

Otake: The fuseki had been easy for me, so I didn't play with enough care. This is a bad habit of mine.

With 48, perhaps I should have capped at 'a'. Even granted that this would have been better, the flow of the game is already bad for me. I myself had spoiled the story that I had depicted in my mind.

Kato: Having Black come out at 51 is nasty.

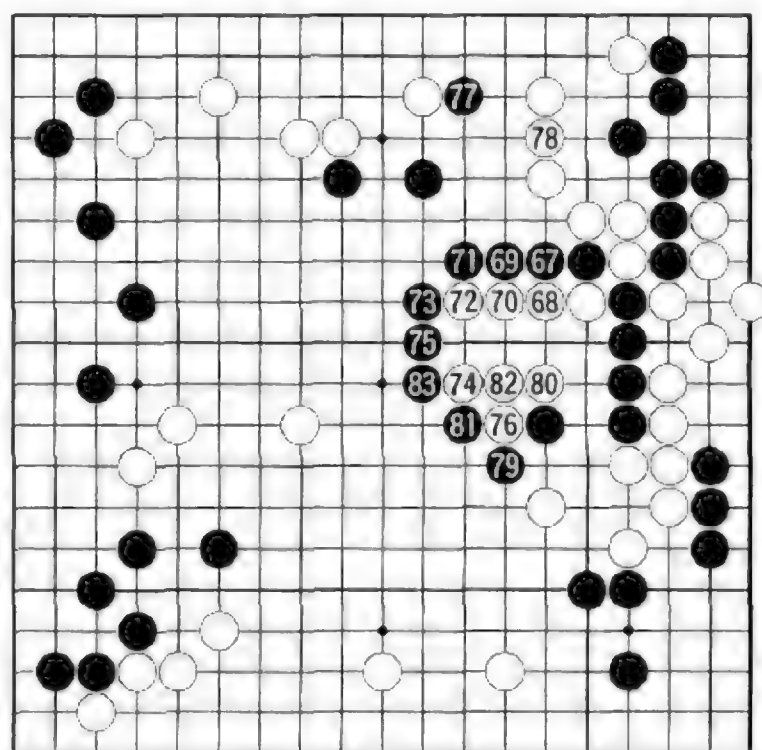


Figure 3 (67 - 83)

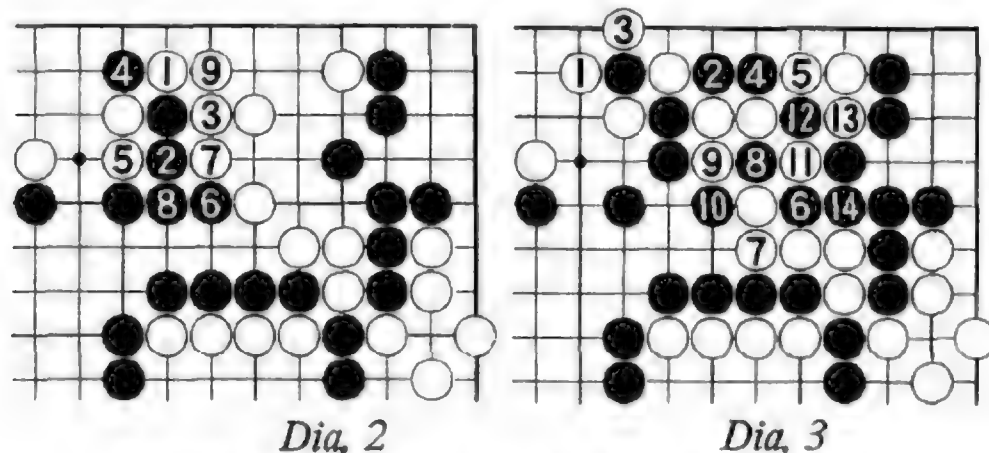


Figure 3 (67 - 83). *Otake's hallucination*

Kato: What was wrong with playing 78 at 1 in Dia. 2?

Kobayashi: If Black cuts at 4, White can resist with 5 and there's no problem.

Otake: I was hallucinating. I read out that Black had a very easy counter to 1.

Kobayashi: If White plays 5 in Dia. 2 at 1 in Dia. 3, then Black's attack succeeds.

IC: This is like a textbook example of a trick move.

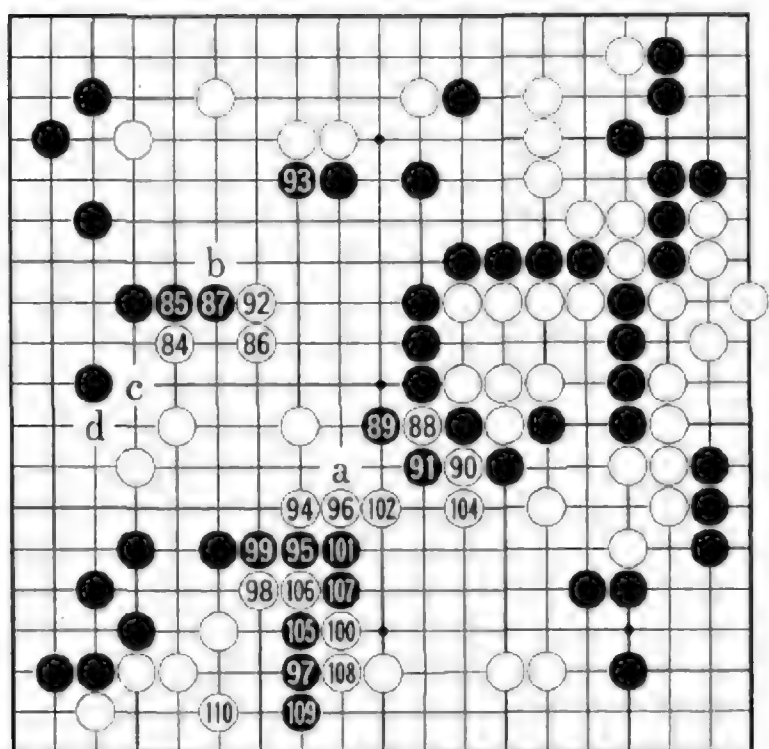


Figure 4 (84 - 110)

103: ko

Figure 4 (84 - 110). Strangling oneself

Otake: For 84, the kosumi at 'a' would have been better. After making Black play something here, White then plays White 84, Black 85, White 87, Black 'b', White 92. Taking territory with this hane and extension looks quite impressive.

Kato: If White hanes at 87 with 86, Black cuts below 87.

Otake: I should have played 86 at 'c'; if Black answers at 'd', White could then have made a hane at 87 and extended. At any rate, White had to create a shape in which he could have hane and extended ...

Kobayashi: Was White 88 bad?

Otake: It was probably the losing move. Giving Black the atari of 89 - it's like putting one's own neck in a noose ... White 88 should also have been at 'a'. The game's hopeless when Black plays the continuation to 107.

Figure 5 (111 - 150). Some hope for White

Kato: But what if, instead of 20, you defied Black with 1 and 3 in Dia. 4? Killing this white group would be far from easy.

Kobayashi: And if it doesn't die, White has taken profit at the bottom ...

Otake: Perhaps there were problems in the way Black attacked.

Kato: He probably had better moves - for example, attaching at 14 with 13.

IC: When Black plays 25, he's scheming to make the cut at 'a'.

Kobayashi: If Black cuts at 'a', White will be

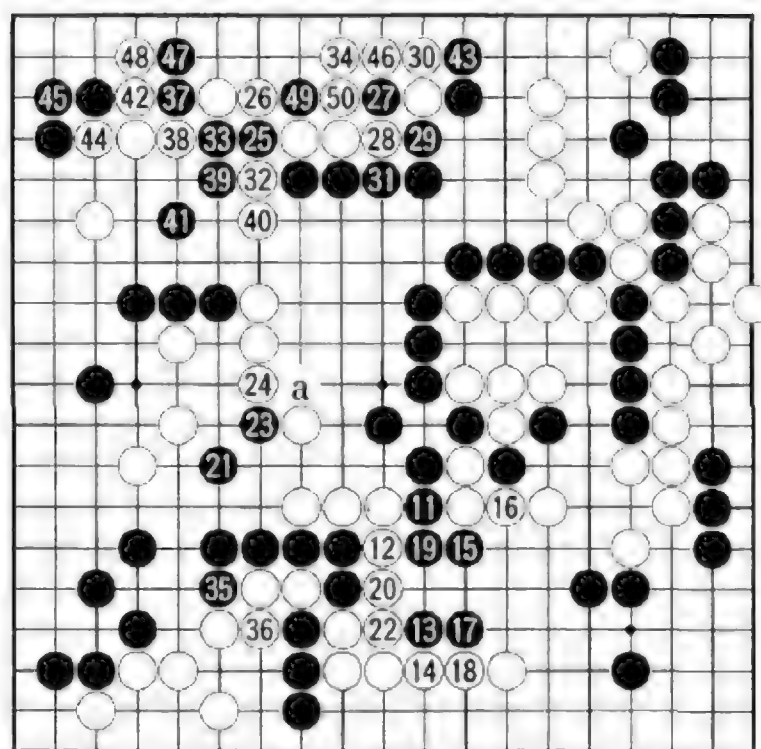
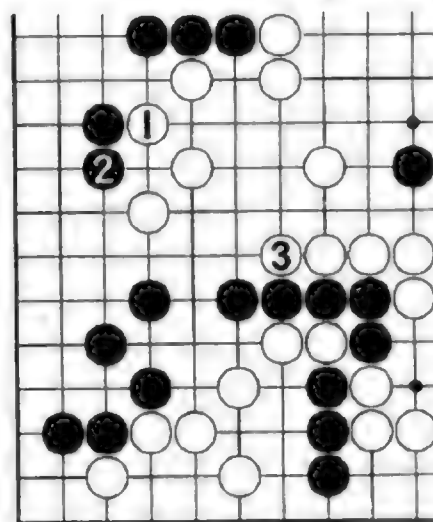
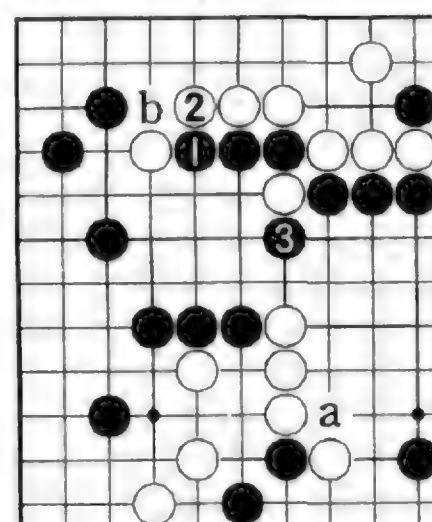


Figure 5 (111 - 150)



Dia. 4



Dia. 5

in bad trouble if he can't capture him.

IC: Nie said that Black 37 was bad, that he should have run into White with 1 in Dia. 5 instead.

Kato: Presumably the idea is to capture with 3, making miai of 'a' and 'b'.

Kobayashi: Cutting at 'b' is big, is it?

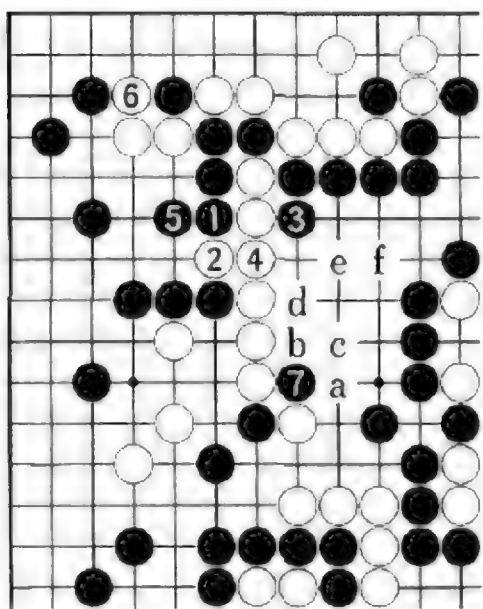
Kato: More important, if Black had used 41 to push down at 1 in Dia. 6, White would have been in trouble. If White 2, then 3 and 5 are a well-timed combination; if 6, then the cut at 7 works.

Kobayashi: White can't capture with 'a' because of Black 3. Without 3, he gets a geta with White 'a', Black 'b', White 'c', Black 'd', White 'e'.

Otake: Apparently Nie overlooked the atari of 3.

IC: Actually Nie did say that after the sequence in Dia. 6 the white peep at 'f' would have made things difficult for Black.

Otake: That's right. Black is going to feel a little nervous about trying to capture White.



Dia. 6

Kato: But what with White saving his centre group up to 42, Black's attack hasn't been impressive.

Kobayashi: Because Black has lost territory.

Kato: This seems to be a failure for Black.

Otake: For my part, I didn't expect everything to end so safely.

IC: The endgame after this is also full of incident.

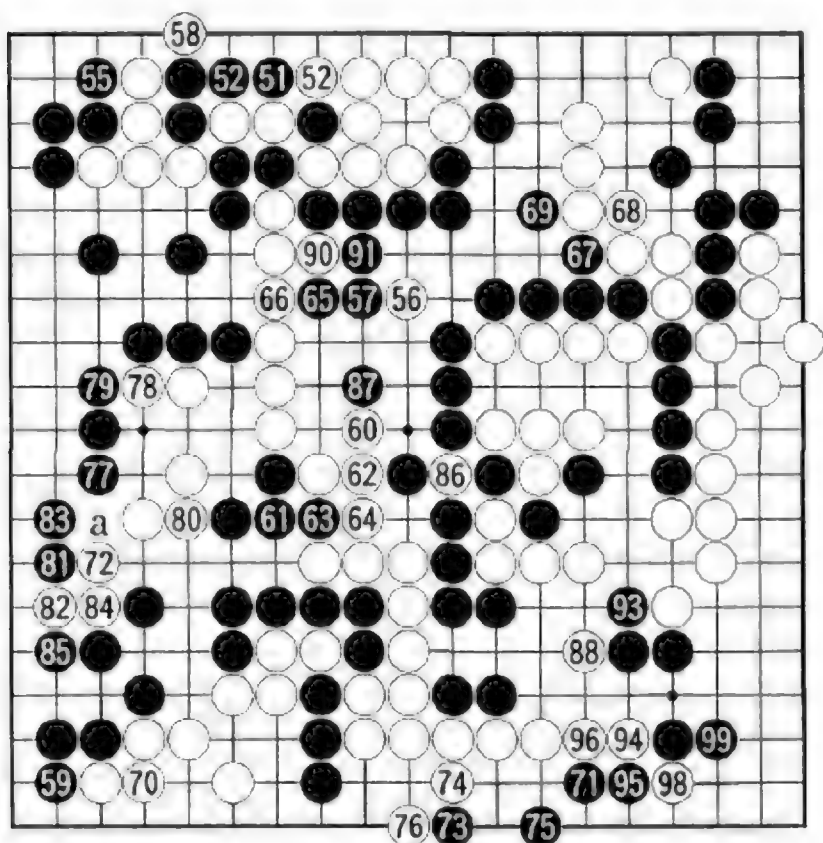


Figure 6 (151 - 200)

54: connects; ko: 89, 92, 97, 100

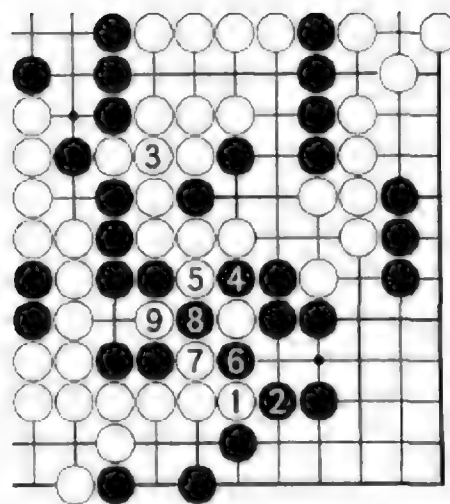
Figure 6 (151 - 200). *Otake misses a half-point win?*

Kobayashi: Wouldn't descending one space above, at 'a', have been better for 72?

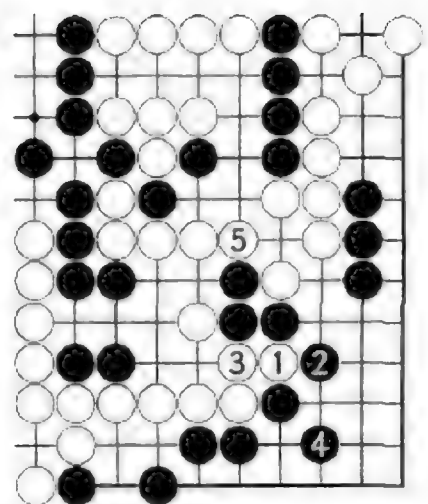
Otake: Maybe.

IC: Nie said that he should have used 81 to defend the bottom right corner.

Kato: Does he mean pushing up at 96?



Dia. 7



Dia. 8

Otake: But descending at White 81 would also have been very big.

IC: A ko fight started after White 94. What would have happened if White had connected the ko instead of playing 94? White catches six stones in an oi-otoshi; the players following the game in the pressroom thought that this might have put White ahead ...

Kato: Yes, yes — up to 9 in Dia. 7.

Otake: I was under the impression that this would have left me a little behind.

Kato: Let's play it out.

(The three play out the endgame and count the score.)

Otake: Ah, it's close. A half-pointer.

Kato: A half-pointer that looks good for White.

Kobayashi: I agree.

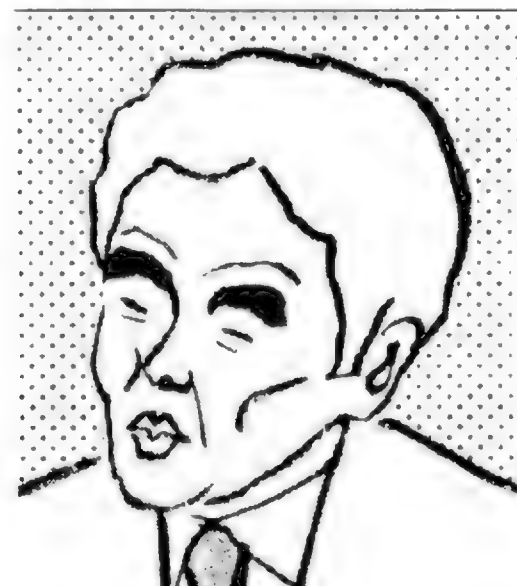
Kato: H'm. White's ahead. He wins.

Otake: What do you know? ... After this White lost an awful lot of points, starting with the cut of 98.

Kato: Playing 1 to 5 in Dia. 8 would have been better than cutting at 98.

Otake: In the game, in contrast, I helped Black to increase his territory.

Kato: On top of that, White ran out of ko threats when Black fought the ko.



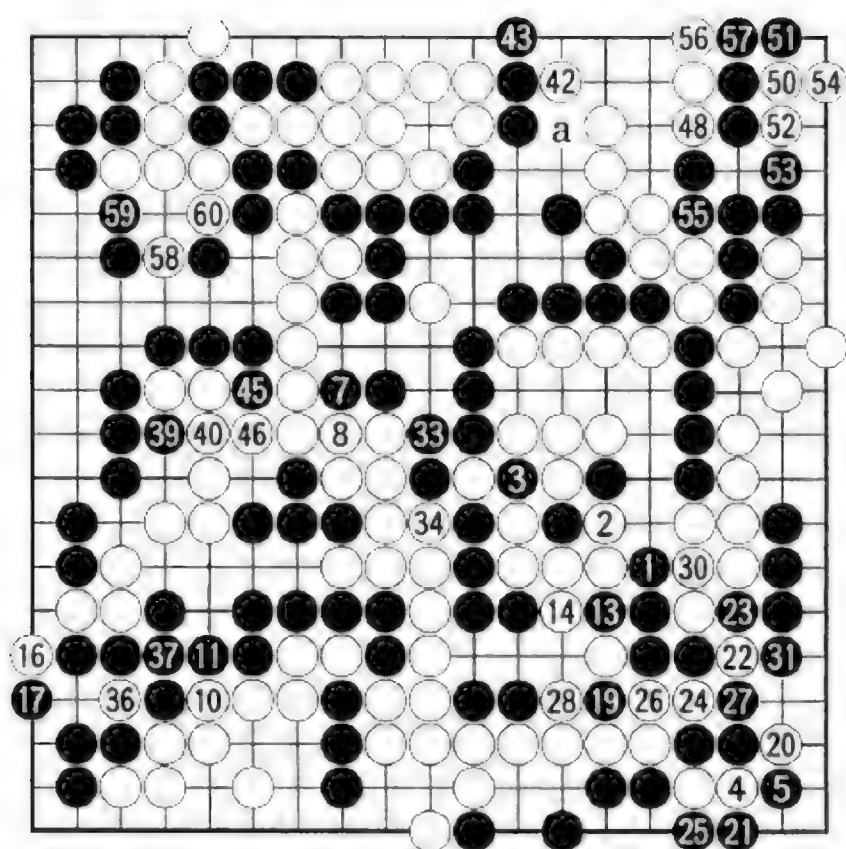
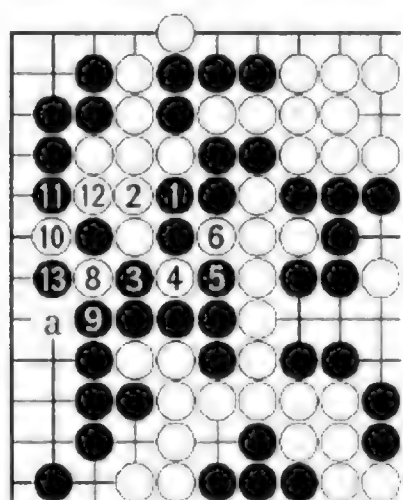


Figure 7 (201 - 260)

Ko: 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 29, 32, 35, 38, 41, 44, 47;
49: connects (left of 3)



Dia. 9

7: connects at 4

Figure 7 (201 - 260). Nie goes into the lead.

IC: Black ended the ko with 49.

Kato: You attacked in the top right corner with 50, but just getting an approach-move ko ...

Otake: I also lost points in setting up the approach-move ko. It would have been better to descend at 56 with 50; when Black plays 57, White could then play at 'a', which would take the pressure off the semedori [the need to take the four black stones below off the board with 66 etc. in the next figure]. That way, with a bit of luck ...

IC: White captured three black stones by wedging in at 58 — is this what should happen?

Otake: It was probably an oversight by Nie.

Kobayashi: Black is short of liberties because of the exchange of 45 for 46 that he made as a ko threat.

IC: Is 59 the oversight?

Otake: I was aware that Nie was overlooking something.

IC: How does Black rescue the three stones?

Kato: If he does try to rescue them, he gets bad aji. The way to save them is Black 1 in Dia. 9, but White counters with 2 to 10.

Kobayashi: White can't connect in answer to the atari of 13, so Black can recapture the two stones at 8 and 10 ...

Otake: But White might play a ko with 'a', so it's scary for Black too.

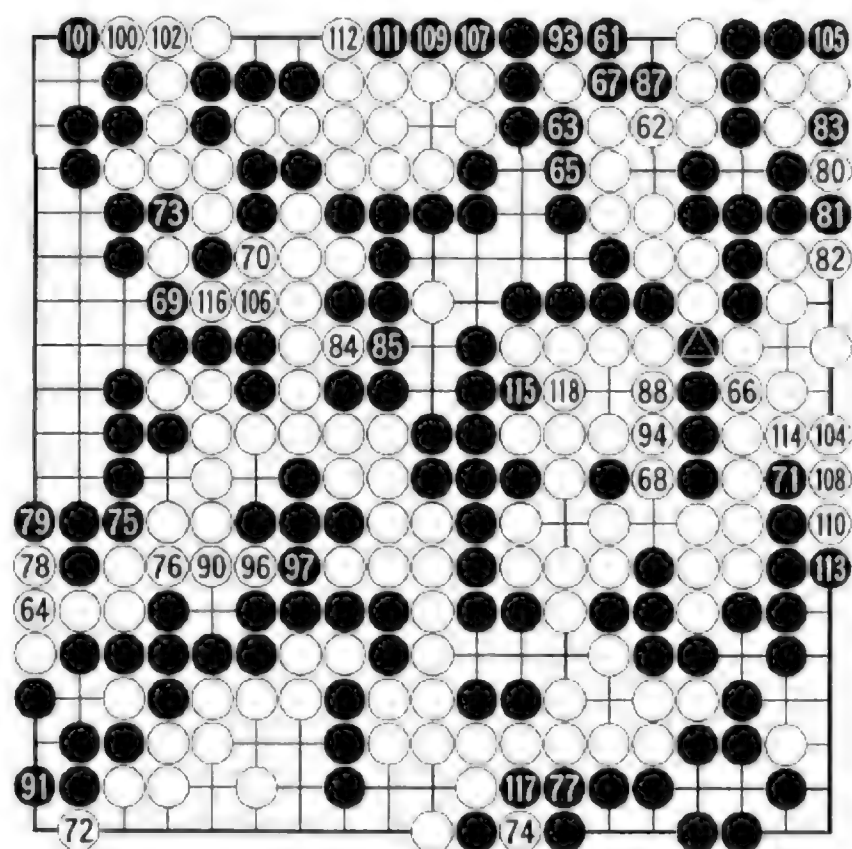


Figure 8 (261 - 320)

Ko: 86, 89, 92, 95, 98; 99: at ▲; 103: ko;
119: connects (below 73); 120: connects (left of 74)

Figure 8 (261 - 320). Victory to the tortoise

IC: You never got the chance to make the approach-move ko a real ko.

Kato: White was cursed by the semedori shape of the four black stones [i.e. he couldn't atari below 62].

IC: This was a good way to round off the series — a great fighting game full of suspense to the very end.

Otake: It was a pathetic way to finish. Yet my fuseki was so good. Black overplayed a little, and I thought that a gap like that between the hare and the tortoise had opened up. Above all, I regret not throwing in a cut with 44 in Figure 1. If I had made that cut, it would have been a very tough game for Nie.

IC: In the public commentary at the Nihon Ki-in, Takemiya assessed the position in the

endgame as a win for White, so the fans were happy, but . . .

Black wins by 2½ points.

(‘Igo Club’, July 1987)

Takemiya v. Nie

Takemiya was in the middle of his post-Kisei slump when he played this game, but still he approached the encounter with confidence, for he had won all four of the games he had played to date against Nie. He must also have been greatly encouraged by the warmth and enthusiasm of the reception that he received in China. Takemiya is well known in China and wherever he went, starting with his arrival at the airport, he was besieged by fans asking for autographs, something that never happens to go players in Japan. Chinese fans look upon Nie with awe, so they have enormous respect for anyone who beats him; Takemiya’s winning streak against Nie had given his ‘cosmic style’ an aura of invincibility.

This game was played at Beijing Gymnasium, with a capacity crowd watching a simultaneous commentary by top Chinese players. This commentary was also telecast for five and a half hours, something that is likewise unthinkable in Japan, the supposed leader of world go. Nie’s victory was the number two item on the evening news that day. It’s fairly obvious that go plays a more important part in the cultural life of China than in any other country.

Ironically, all the flattering attention given to Takemiya may have proved to be his undoing, as the reader will see in the commentary. Be that as it may, this game is an excellent illustration of the pitfall of ignoring the go proverb, ‘play the urgent point rather than the big move’.

White: Nie Weiping

Black: Takemiya Masaki, Honinbo

Played on 31 March 1987 in Beijing.

Commentary by Fujisawa Shuko.

Figure 1 (1 – 38). *Going against the proverb*

White 8 is Nie’s strategy for countering the Takemiya cosmic style. If White invaded the corner immediately with 1 in Dia. 1, Black would of course build up the centre with 2 to 6. Exchanging 8 for 9 deprives Black of this option.

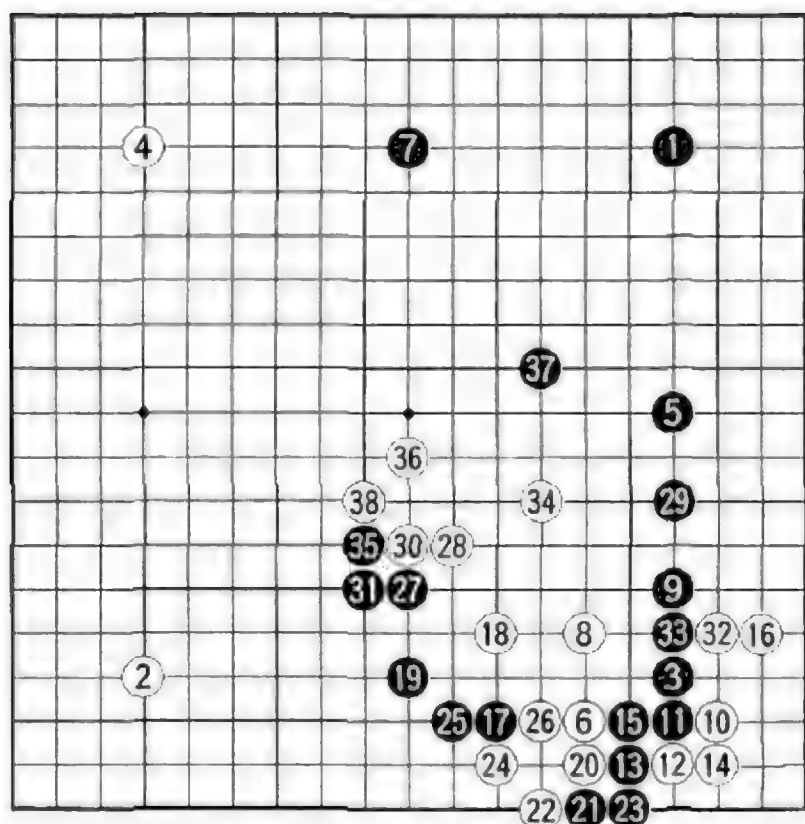
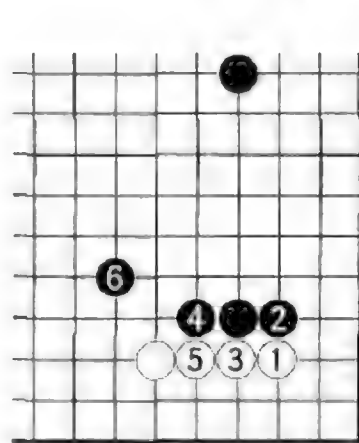
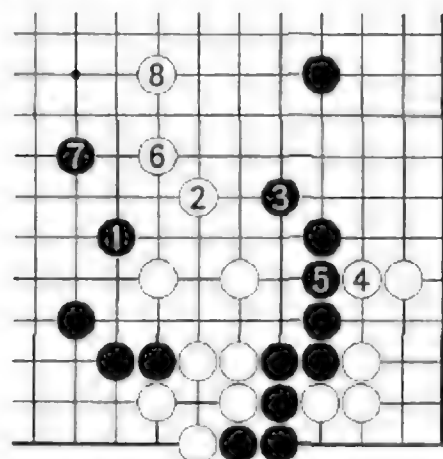


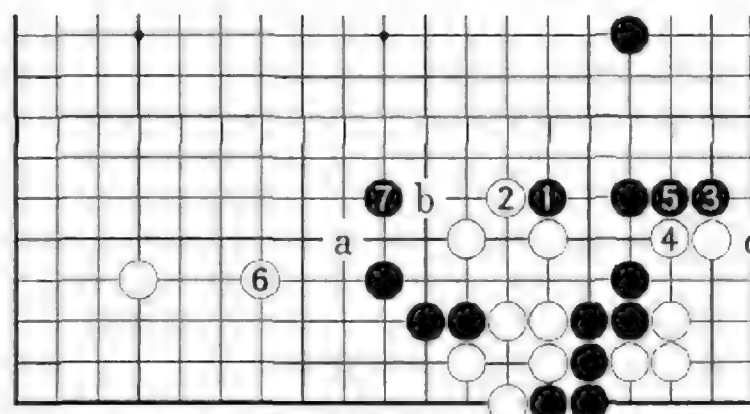
Figure 1 (1 – 38)



Dia. 1



Dia. 2



Dia. 3

Black 27 was much regretted by Takemiya, as 28 became an excellent point. He wished he had pressed at 1 in Dia. 2. If White 2, Black continues the attack with 3. The result to 8 is better for Black than the actual game; however, there is still the drawback that White moves into Black’s moyo with 6 and 8, so Shuko proposed an alternative strategy.

Dia. 3. Shuko’s idea was to attach at 1, then to attach at 3 in an attempt to secure the side. Black 1 makes 5 possible by stopping White from pushing through to the left of 4 and cutting. White would probably start a fight by attacking at 6. If instead White 6 at ‘a’, Black has a good counter at ‘b’. This variation strikes the right

note of aggression for Black; he can also aim at killing the corner with 'c'.

Black 37 may look like a move on the grand scale, but here is what Takemiya had to say about it: 'I was insane . . . This is the move of a sleepwalker.' In fact, once Black plays this move, the game is over: White makes superb shape with 38 and relieves all the pressure on his own group while putting severe pressure on the black group below. This is a perfect illustration of the sin of not following the proverb, 'play the urgent point rather than the big move'.

Dia. 4. Black must extend at 1; compared to 38 in the figure, this reverses the balance of power in the centre.

Why did Takemiya play 37? Perhaps he felt he had to play in character, that everyone expected him to play on a grand scale. After all, the questions at the press conference had focussed on his 'cosmic style', so he was perhaps reluctant to disappoint his fans. The ironic result was that he played out of character, for his large-moyo strategy is usually based on much more rigorous analysis than went into 37.

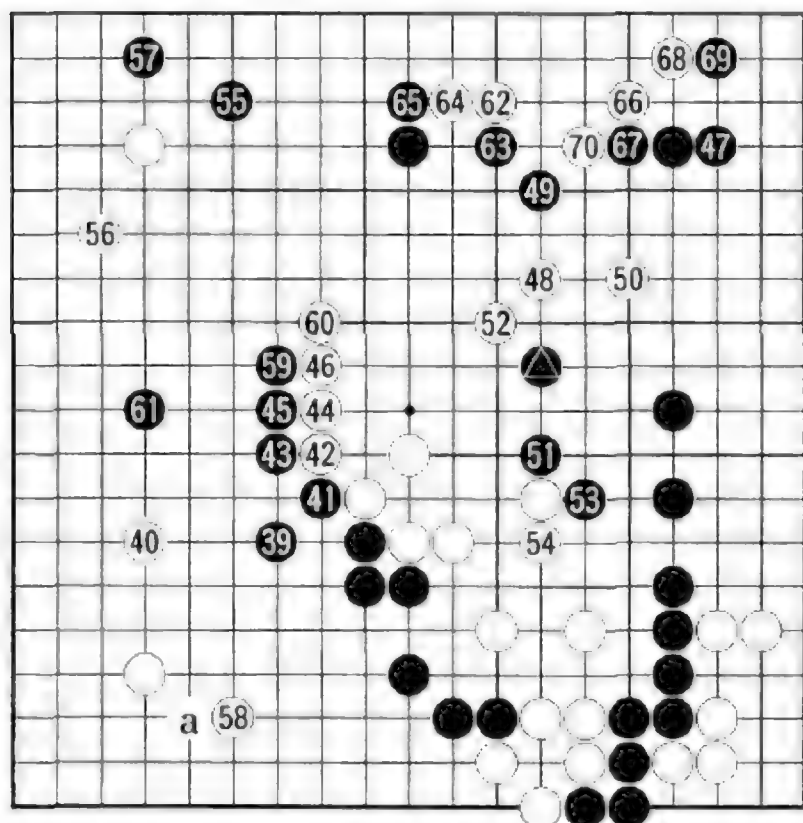
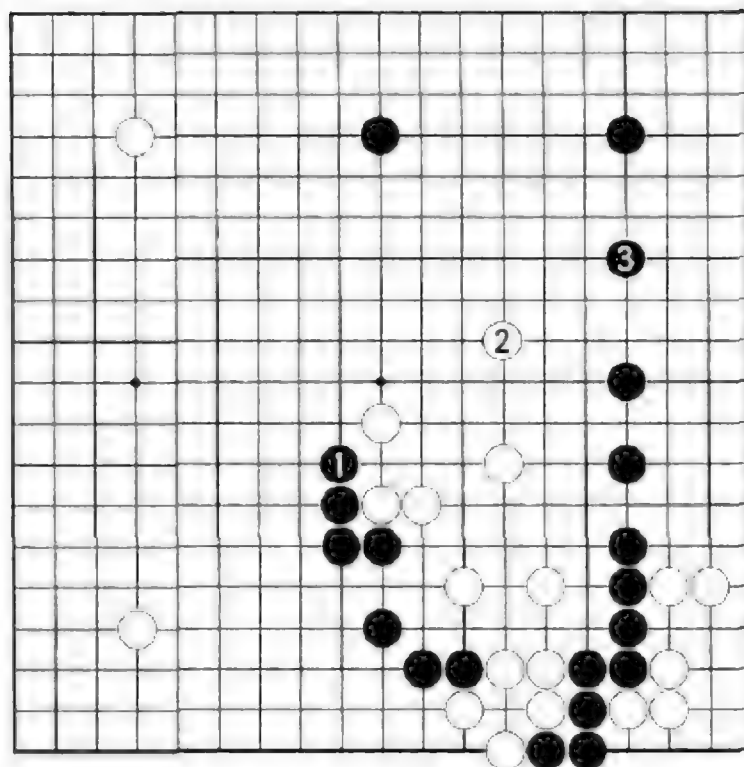


Figure 2 (39 - 70)

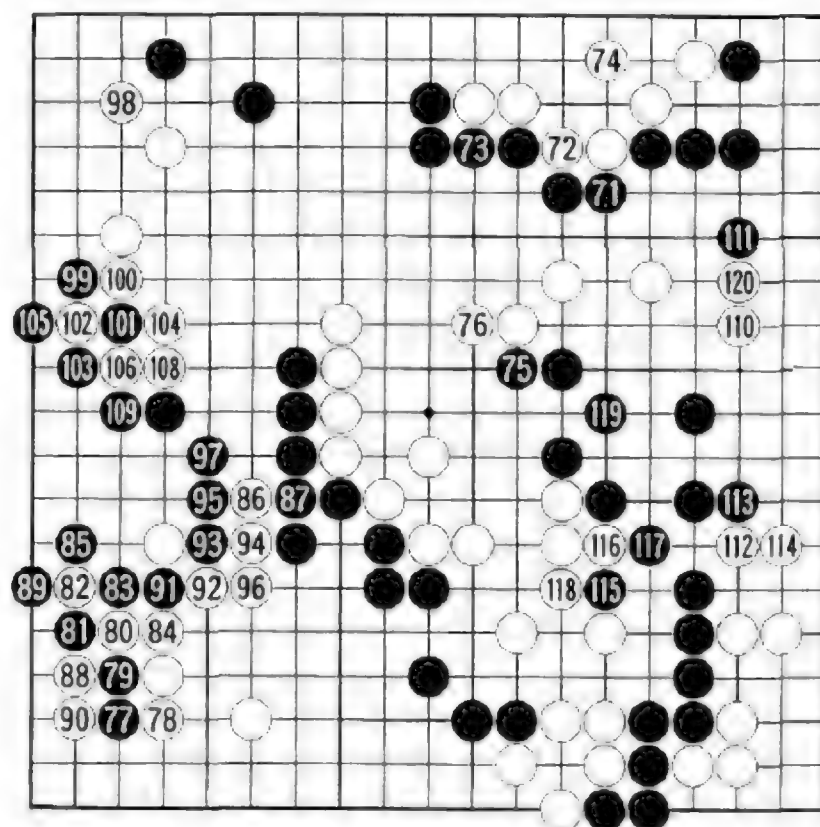
Figure 2 (39 - 70). *Nie takes control of the center.*

Up to 46 White becomes very thick; the marked black stone ends up too close to a strong white position - it must be one of the worst moves of Takemiya's career. With his support in the centre, White has no trouble invading with 48 and 50.



Dia. 4: play the vital point rather than the big move

White 58, the only move by Nie that Shuko criticized, is a little thin; White 'a' would stop Black from invading at 77 in Figure 3. Nonetheless, Nie moves steadily towards victory with his invasion at 62. Once again, White's centre thickness preempts a counterattack by Black. When White lives up to 74 in Figure 3, the territorial balance has been destroyed.

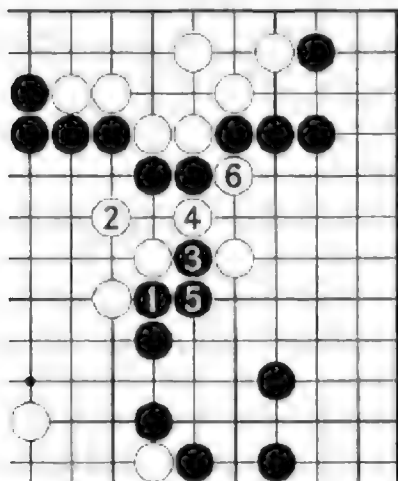


*Figure 3 (71 - 120)
107: connects*

Figure 3 (71 - 120). *Nie winds the game up.*

Black 75. Black doesn't like helping White to strengthen himself with 76, but attacking with 1 in Dia. 5 doesn't get anywhere.

The invasion at 77 is a success, but it doesn't



Dia. 5

alter the larger picture.

White counters Black 99 by forcing up to 108; he then switches to 110, deciding the issue beyond all doubt. From this point on, Nie showed great skill in wrapping up the game. When Takemiya resigned, the game was close on the board.

Figure 4 (121 – 188). *Winning the one that counts*

Nie picked up his first win ever against Takemiya and he did it in their most important game. The Japanese team was reeling: it had seen what looked like an insurmountable lead of

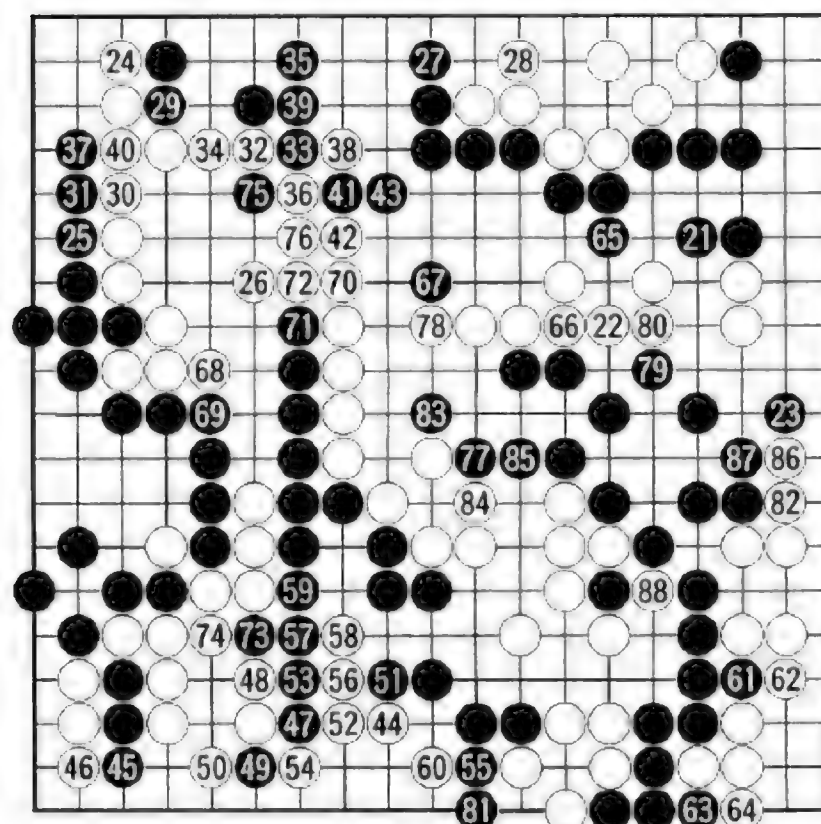


Figure 4 (121 – 188)

8–4 dwindle away to nothing. As it turned out, the momentum Nie had picked up by now had made him unstoppable.

Black resigns after White 188

(‘Go Weekly’, 21 & 28 April 1987. Translated by John Power.)



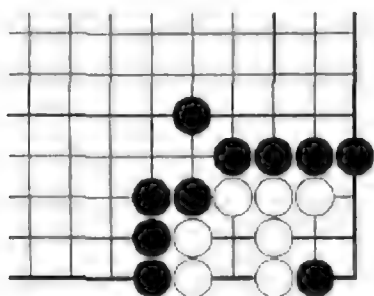
Surrounded by a crowd of Chinese go players, Takemiya and Nie go over the game.

Strange and Wonderful Shapes

Haruyama Isamu 9-dan

There are all kinds of unusual shapes in go, ranging from sekis and double snapbacks that any beginner will run into sooner or later to revolving kos and groups living with false eyes that virtually never occur in actual play. In this article we would like to introduce the reader to some of these strange and wonderful shapes.

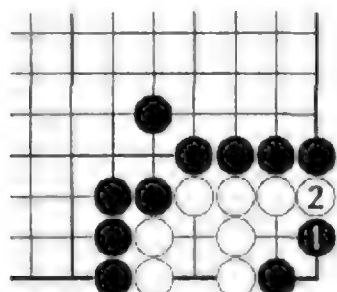
1. Seki



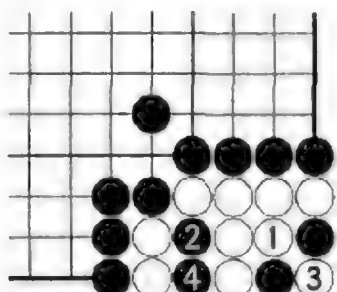
Pattern 1. Black to play

What is the result if Black plays first in the above position? Black of course can't capture the white group, but he can get a seki. The problem is finding the best way of doing this.

Dia. 1. Exchanging Black 1 for White 2 is the correct answer. Next —

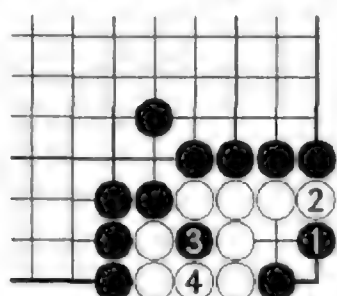


Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2. If White tries to capture Black with 1, Black throws in at 2 and White can't connect. The result is that each side captures two stones, so neither profits. Consequently, White will leave the position as it is in Dia. 1. Since it is a seki, neither side gets any points.



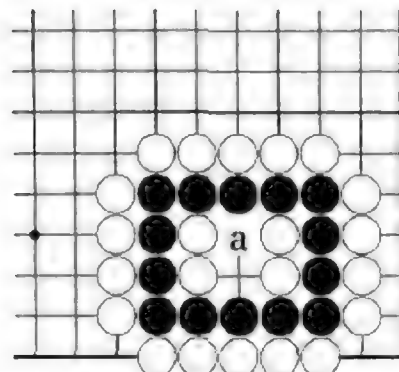
Dia. 3

Dia. 3. Following up Dia. 1 by throwing in at 3 later is a mistake. The result is still a seki, but White gains a point by capturing the black stone with 4. As demonstrated by Dia. 2, Black doesn't have to do anything more after Dia. 1 to secure his seki.

This seki frequently occurs in actual play. Black could use 3 in Dia. 3 as a ko threat.



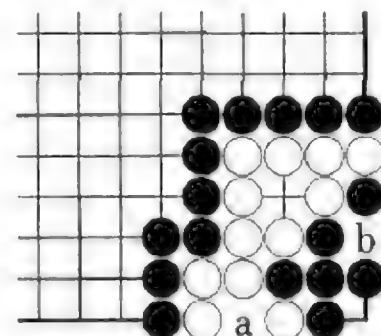
Haruyama Isamu 9-dan



Pattern 2. Identify this position.

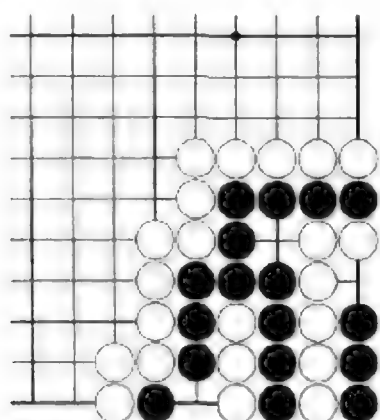
What happens if either side plays a move here? One look should be enough to see that White can't do anything: if he plays at 'a', Black captures and lives. On the other hand, it may seem that Black can capture the white stones at any time by playing at 'a', but this is a hallucination. If he does play 'a', he commits suicide by reducing himself to one liberty.

The solution is for both sides to do nothing. The position is a seki as it stands.



Pattern 3. Black or White to play

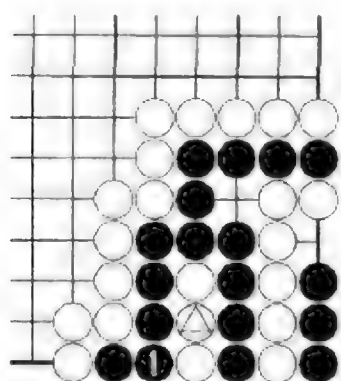
Let's suppose that Black plays first, capturing at 'a'. White answers by capturing at 'b'. If Black then makes a ko threat and next captures the white stone at 'b', White responds by capturing the black stone at 'a'. That gets us back to the original position. In other words, neither side can hope to win this ko fight: it is a double-ko seki.



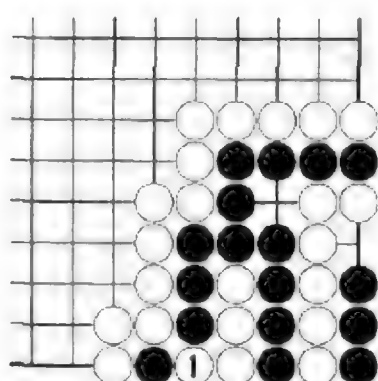
Pattern 4. White or Black to play

It may take the reader a while to work out exactly what is going on here. If you try moving first with black, then with white, you should get an idea.

Dia. 1. If it is Black's turn, he can capture at 1; White of course will make a placement at the marked stone to stop him from making two eyes. Black will then lose the capturing race, as his eye will be smaller than the eye of the corner white group. Please confirm this for yourself.



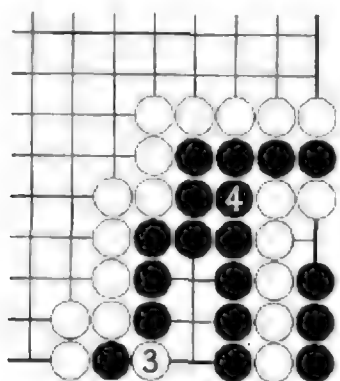
Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2. If White plays first, he can capture at 1. Black will then capture the four white stones. Next —

Dia. 3. White in turn captures at 3, but then

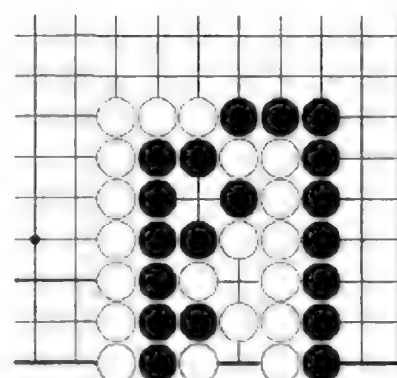


Dia. 3

Black plays 4 and wins the capturing race by one move.

The conclusion is that whoever plays first here loses the fight. The wisest course, therefore, is to sit tight and do nothing. In this case, the position is a seki — it is known as the 'hane seki'.

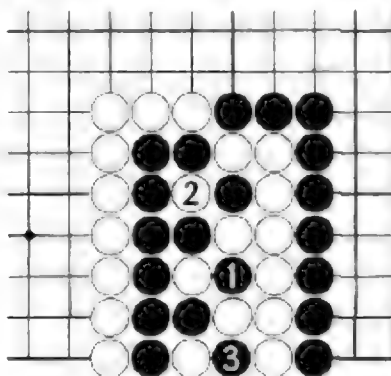
2. Triple ko



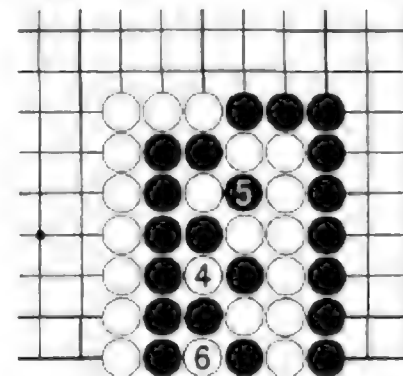
Pattern 5. Black to play

What happens in this capturing race? Black is in atari, so he must do something.

Dia. 1. The simplest thing is to take one of the kos, for example, with 1 here. This puts White into atari, so he will capture another one of the kos. Since he is now in atari, Black will capture the third ko with 3. Next —



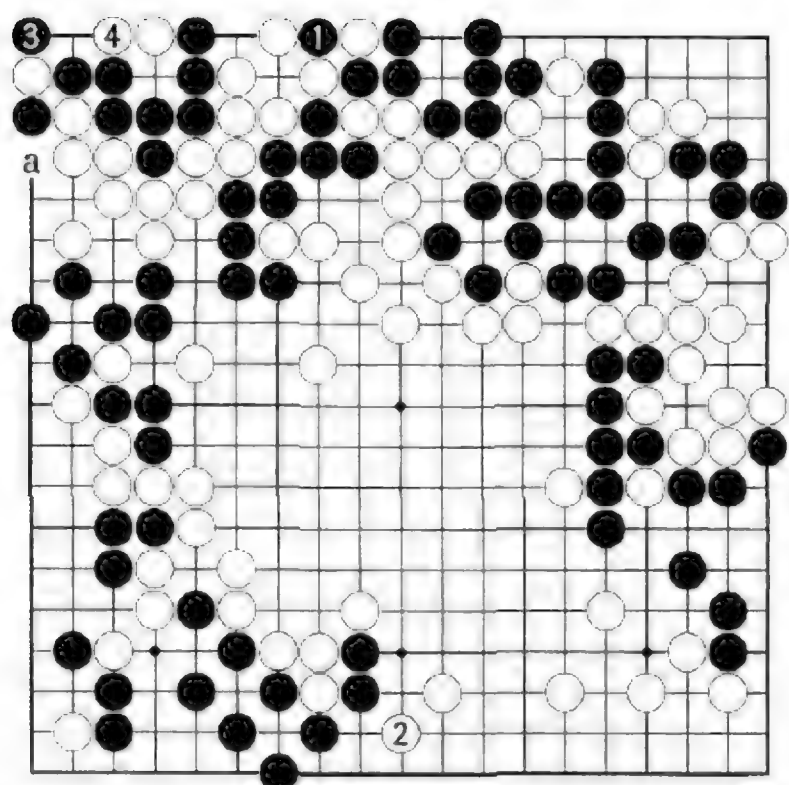
Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2. The fight could continue in this fashion. After 6 we are back where we started. Going through the sequence of Dias. 1 and 2 again is pointless. This position is called triple ko and if neither side is willing to give way, then according to the rules the game is declared no contest.

The first triple ko is supposed to have arisen in a game between Sansa, the 1st Honinbo, and Kashio Rigen, played in 1582 at the Honnoji temple in Kyoto (see 'Page from Go History', GW6). The game was watched by Oda Nobunaga, then the ruler of Japan, and the night after the game, his ally Akechi Mitsuhide suddenly rose in rebellion and attacked the temple, killing Nobunaga. Because of this association, a triple ko has traditionally been regarded as inauspicious.



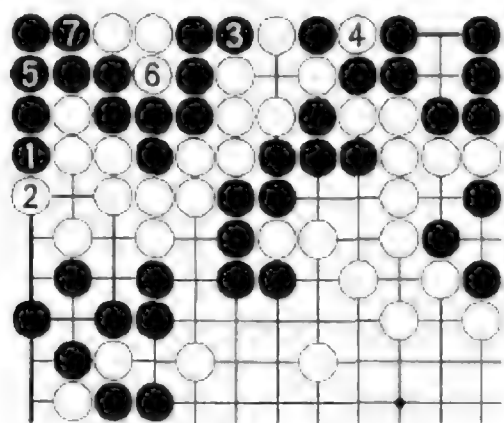
Dia. 3

Dia. 3. Here is an example of a triple ko in a modern professional game. It was played in the rating tournament in 1971 between Cho Chikun, then 3-dan, on black and Fukui Masaki, then 5-dan.

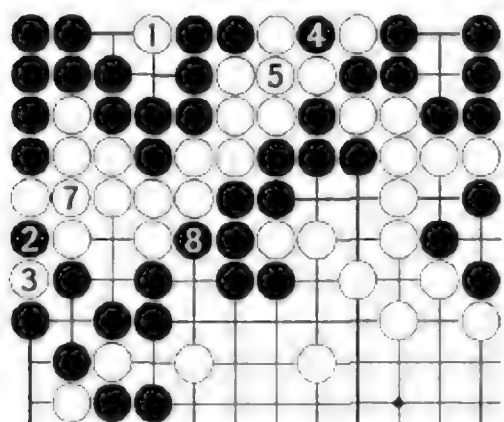
When Black played 1, White tenukied and switched to the bottom with 2. If White played 2 at 'a', the corner black group would be captured, but either White thought that would not be enough to win or he overlooked Black's continuation. With 3, Black aims at a capturing race. Next —

Dia. 4. Black 1 looks like a good move. Black forces with 3, then connects at 5. White has no choice but to set about capturing Black with 6.

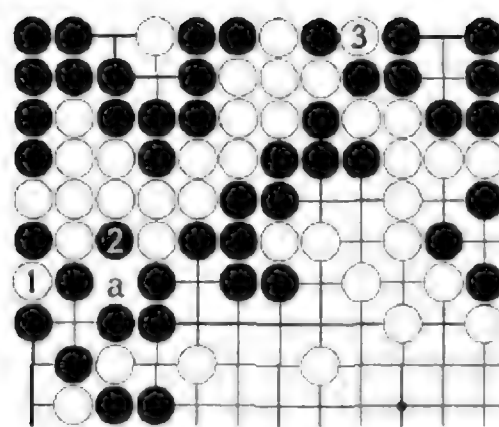
Dia. 5. The continuation from 1 to 8 is forced. Next —



Dia. 4



Dia. 5 6: at 2



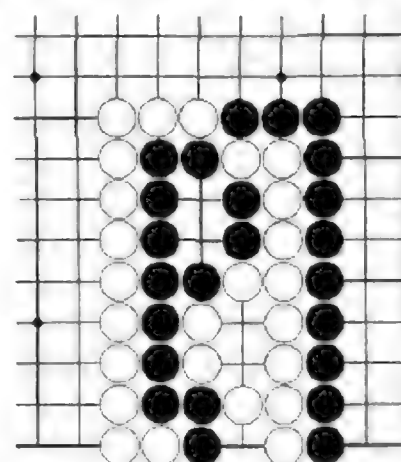
Dia. 6

Dia. 6. The moves to 3 set up the triple ko. After 3, Black will capture above 1, forcing White to capture at 'a'. White has to keep rotating through the three kos, because he is put into atari each time Black captures. The game, of course, had to be declared no contest.

Cho Chikun later got another triple ko in a game with Kato, who at the time was Honinbo. There are not many players who have had this experience twice. More recently, there has even been a quadruple ko.

3. Rotating ko

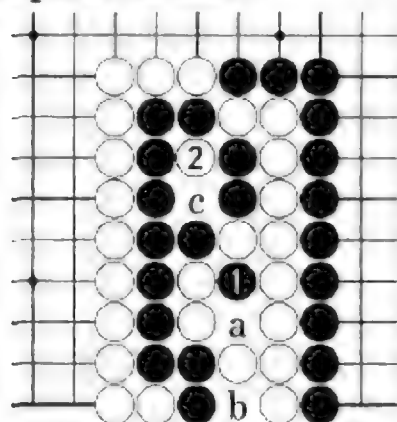
This shape has probably never come up in a game, but there is nothing bizarre-looking about it. The only strange thing is the name: it is not really a ko, though the way it works is similar.



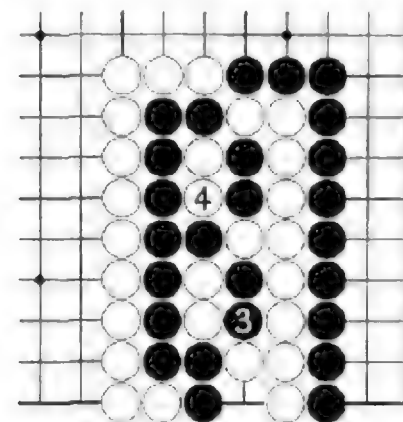
Pattern 6. Black to play

At first glance this position looks like a seki, but that is not necessarily so.

Dia. 1. The point is that when Black plays 1, White can't capture at 'a', as Black then plays 'b' and wins the semeai. White's only answer is to throw in at 2. If Black answers by capturing at 'c', White captures at 'a', and we get an indisputable seki.



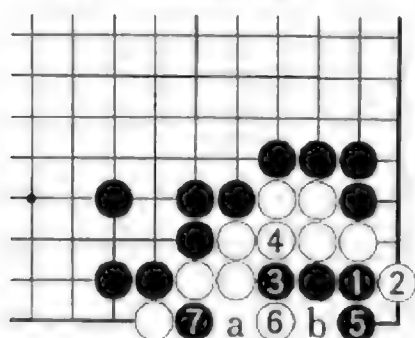
Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2. If Black captures at 3 because he dislikes the idea of a seki, he will find himself in a similar position to the initial one when White in turn captures at 4. If one of the players refuses to yield and persists in repeating this round of captures, the game has to be declared no contest.

4. Eternal life

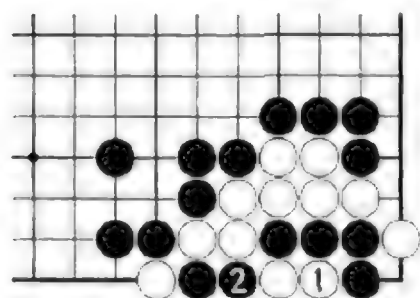


Pattern 7

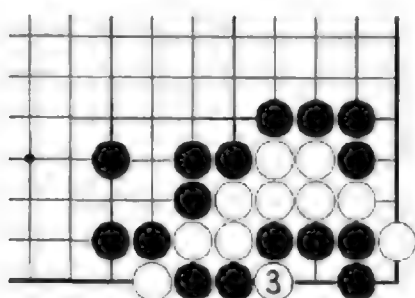
This position could easily come up in actual play. If it is Black's turn to play and he wants to attack the corner, his only moves are Black 1 to 5. White now has to play 6 to prevent Black from making an eye. Black 7 next is also the only move.

This point is where the problem arises. If White now captures at 'a', Black will play 'b', making a 5-stone big eye (gomoku nakade) and killing White. However, there is a strange move that enables White to avoid dying.

Dia. 1. White plays the sacrifice of 1, which is his only way of avoiding gomoku nakade. Black naturally captures at 2, whereupon —



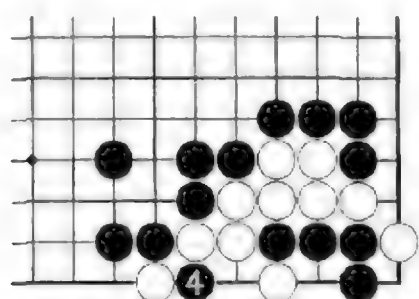
Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Dia. 2. White in turn recaptures with 3. This takes us back to the position after 6 in Pattern 7. Next —

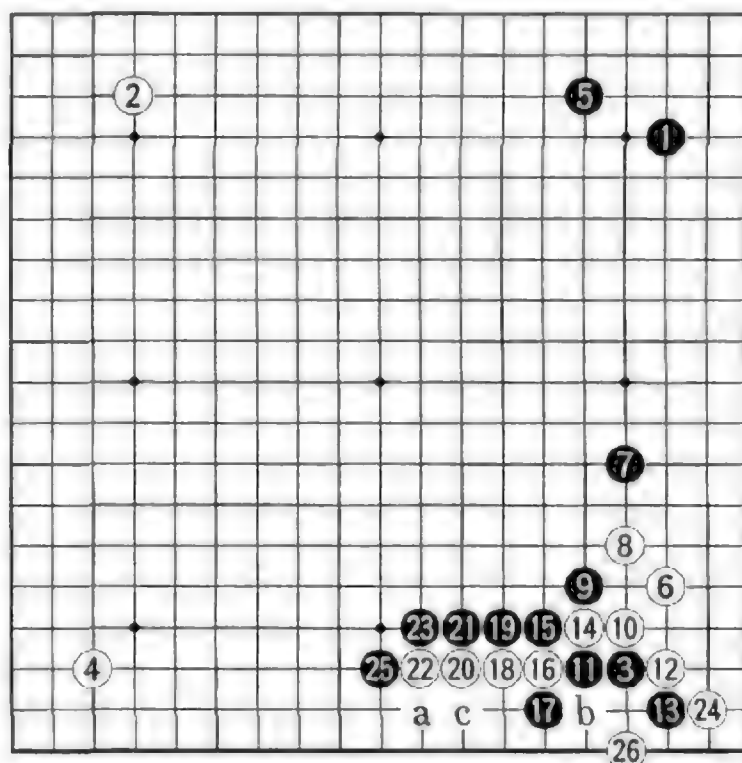
Dia. 3. Black has to play 4, so we are launched on a repetition of Dias. 1 and 2. If neither side is prepared to give way, the game has to



Dia. 3

be declared no contest.

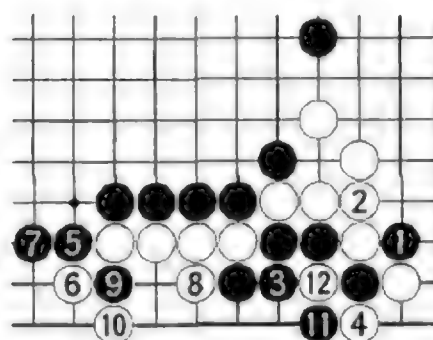
Dia. 4. This position comes from the first game of the 1965 Honinbo title match, in which Yamabe 9-dan (black) challenged Sakata Eio. An unusual shape was created in the opening.



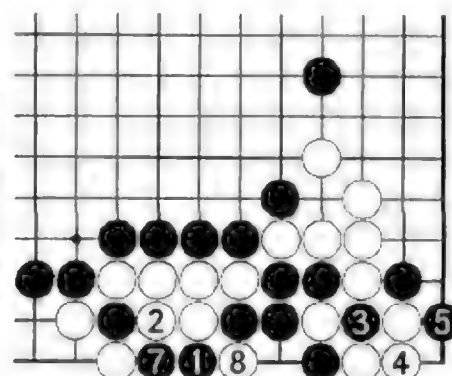
Dia. 4

When Black hanes at 25, White captures the corner group with the placement of 26. Later Black made a hane at 'a', followed by White 'b' and Black 'c', but the problem of what would have happened if Black had used 25 to follow Dia. 5 provoked a lot of discussion at the time.

Dia. 5. If Black forces with 1, then connects with 3, White will atari at 4, but now Black hanes at 5. Forcing with 5 to 9 before playing the ko is a very subtle strategy. After the ko starts with 11 and 12 —



Dia. 5

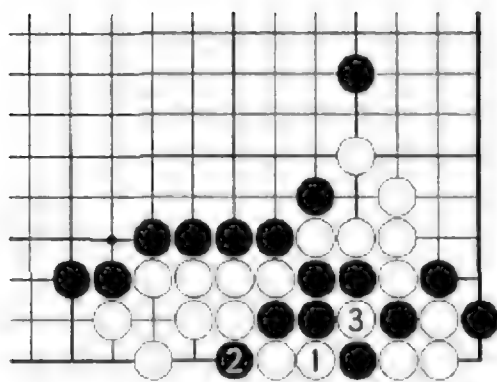


Dia. 6

6, 9: ko

Dia. 6. Black uses 1 as a ko threat, then retakes the ko with 3. White has no choice but to connect at 4, so now Black makes it a serious ko fight with 5. After 6, Black uses 7 as a ko threat. After 9 —

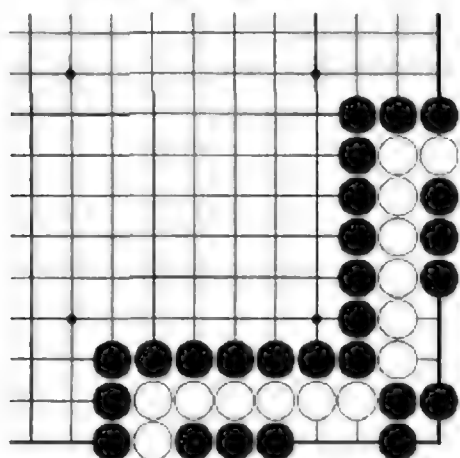
Dia. 7. White can make the same kind of ko threat by thrusting in at 1. Black 2 takes us back to the original position (i.e. after 6 in Dia. 6).



Dia. 7

This result is an 'eternal life' involving a ko. If it had appeared in the game, it would have created a very unusual record.

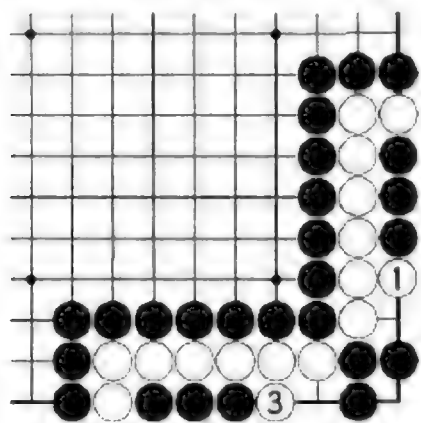
5. One group dies



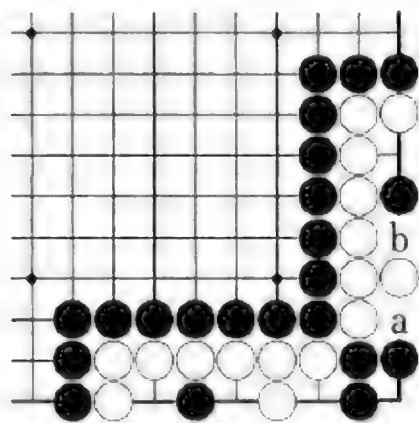
Pattern 8

This position is as unusual as the 'hane seki' shown in Pattern 4. Before giving the conclusion, let's see what happens when each side plays first.

Dia. 1. White attempts to capture the three black stones in the corner by playing at 1. Black plays at the centre point to stop White from making two eyes. When White captures the other three stones with 3, Black again plays at the centre point.



Dia. 1



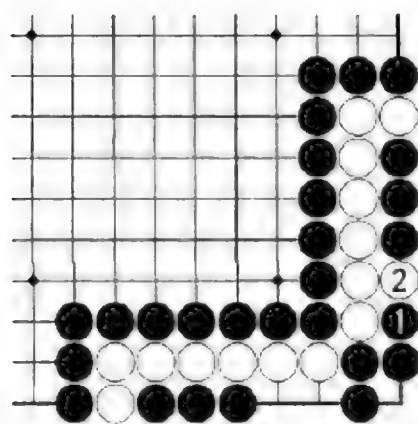
Dia. 2

Dia. 2. This is the result. If next White plays 'a', Black counters with 'b' and captures him. Even if White does nothing, Black can capture White by playing at 'b'. In short, the white groups on both sides die. The conclusion is that in this position White can't do anything.

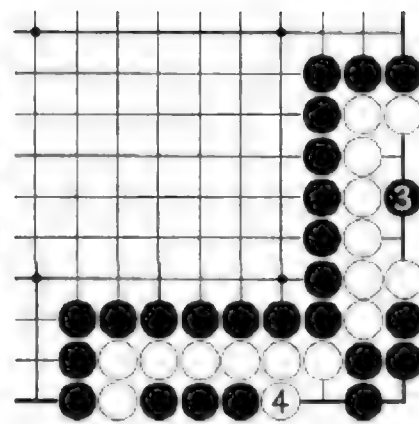
Dia. 3. This time Black plays first.

Dia. 4. Black must play 3, but after 4 —

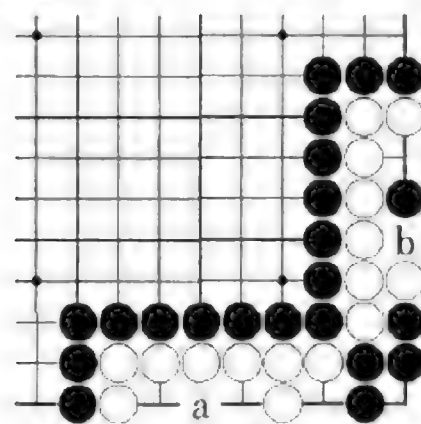
Dia. 5. This is the position we get. Black has



Dia. 3



Dia. 4



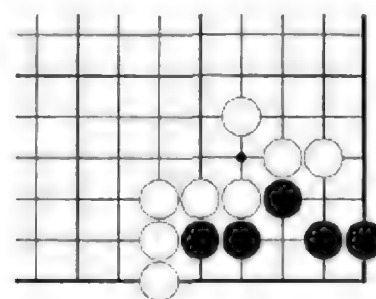
Dia. 5

no time to play in at 'a', so his only move is Black 'b', though this lets White live at the bottom with White 'a'.

The conclusion is that if Black plays here, he can capture one of the white groups, but the other one lives. Consequently, this is how the position is adjudicated under the current Nihon Ki-in rules.

6. The under-the-stones tesuji

This is a tesuji that is quite difficult to spot, but it does come up often in actual play. We shall give three examples for you to brush up your knowledge of this technique.

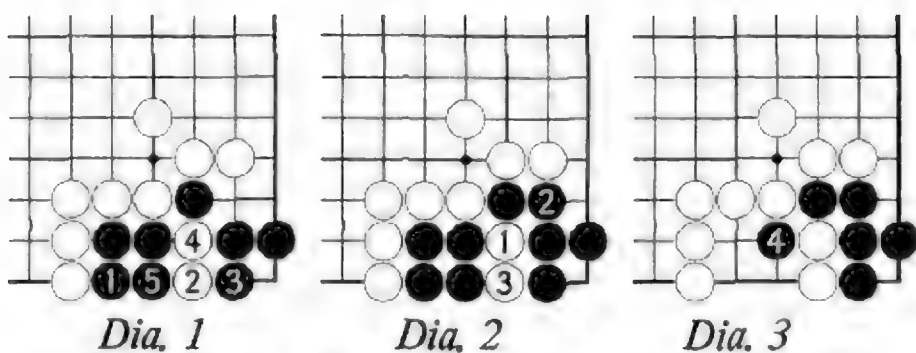


Pattern 9. Black to play and live

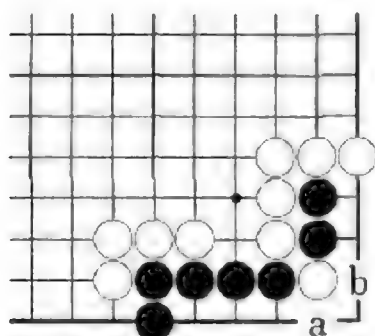
Dia. 1. Black blocks at 1 to give himself the maximum room for eye space. It's obvious, however, that White will attack at the vital point of 2; the problem is how to deal with this move. After 5 —

Dia. 2. White throws in at 1. If Black captures at 3, White kills him with an atari at 2. Connecting at 2 is a clever counter. After 3 —

Dia. 3. Black cuts at 4 and gets his second eye. In this tesuji pattern, Black lets White cut the skin while he cuts the flesh. If you



know when to look for it, the under-the-stones tesuji can get you out of some tight corners.

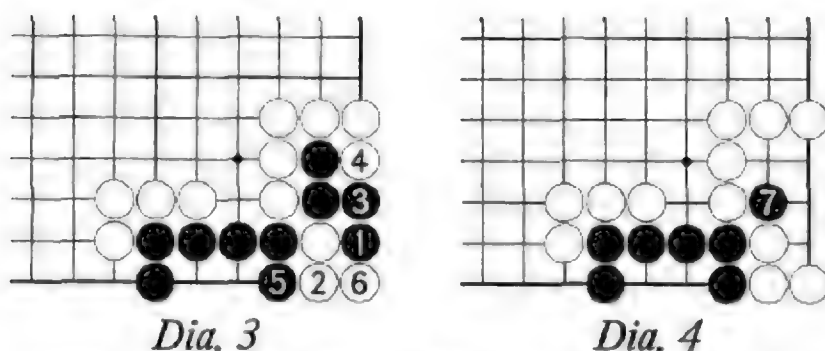
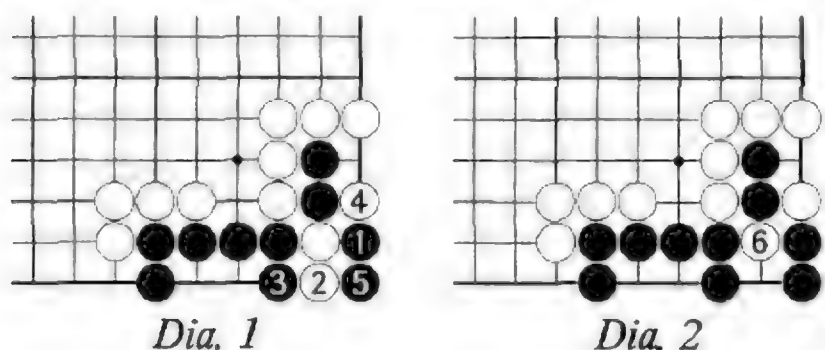


Pattern 10. Black to play and live

Whatever happens, Black must not atari at 'a', as he dies when White descends at 'b'. That means that the only move left is Black 'b'.

Dia. 1. Black 3 looks like the only move, but next White will atari at 4, then —

Dia. 2. Black dies when White makes the throw-in at 6. Black must improve on 3 in Dia. 1.



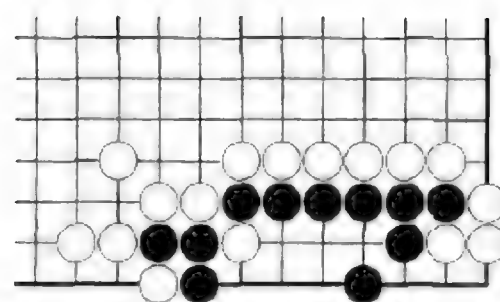
Dia. 3. Connecting at 3 is a very clever move. White of course captures with 6, but —

Dia. 4. Black promptly recaptures with 7.

The previous pattern is known as 'the group of four'; this one is called the 'lightning' pattern. It is just as likely to occur in actual play.

Pattern 11. The three black stones to the left may be lost, but Black can still make good use of them.

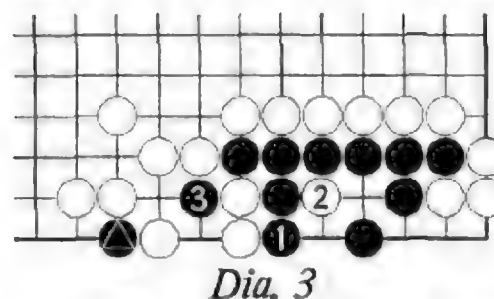
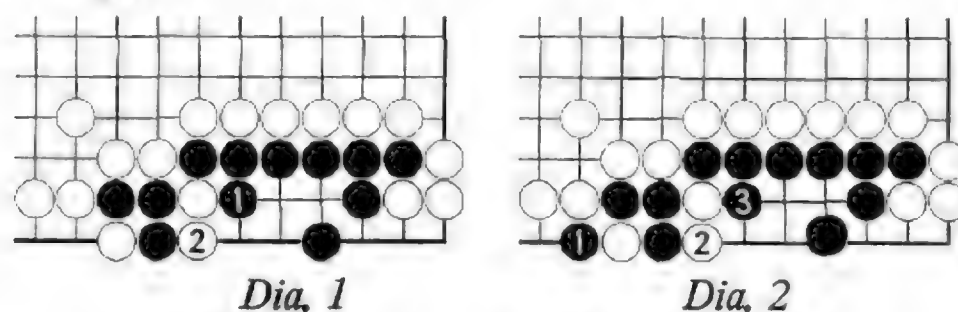
Dia. 1. Playing an atari at 1 is useless: there



Pattern 11. Black to play and live

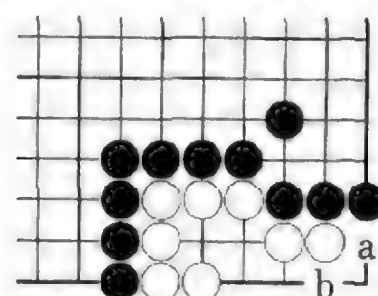
is no way Black can get enough space to live.

Dia. 2. Black tries capturing the white stone to see what happens. White must play 2, so now Black ataris. White captures with 4, whereupon —



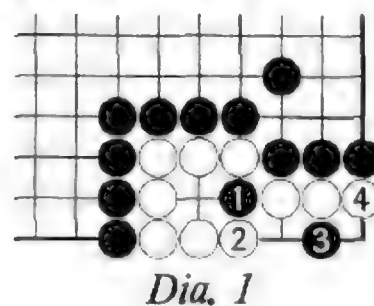
Dia. 3. Black blocks at 1. If White destroys his eye shape with 2, he is unable to connect in answer to 3. Note the effectiveness of the marked stone. This is an interesting variation of the under-the-stones tesuji.

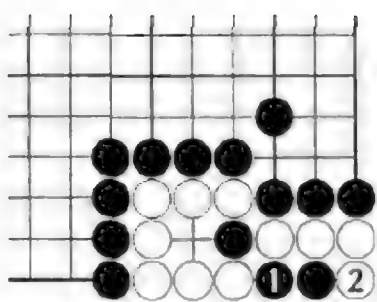
7. Double Snapback



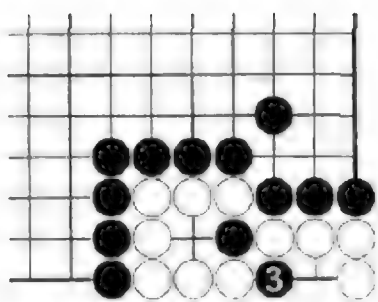
Pattern 12. Black to play and kill White. Turning at 'a' just lets White live with 'b'.

Dia. 1. The key is to start by cutting at 1. The follow-up tesuji is attaching at 3. White intercepts at 4; perhaps he still doesn't realize that something is wrong, but Black has a nasty





Dia. 2



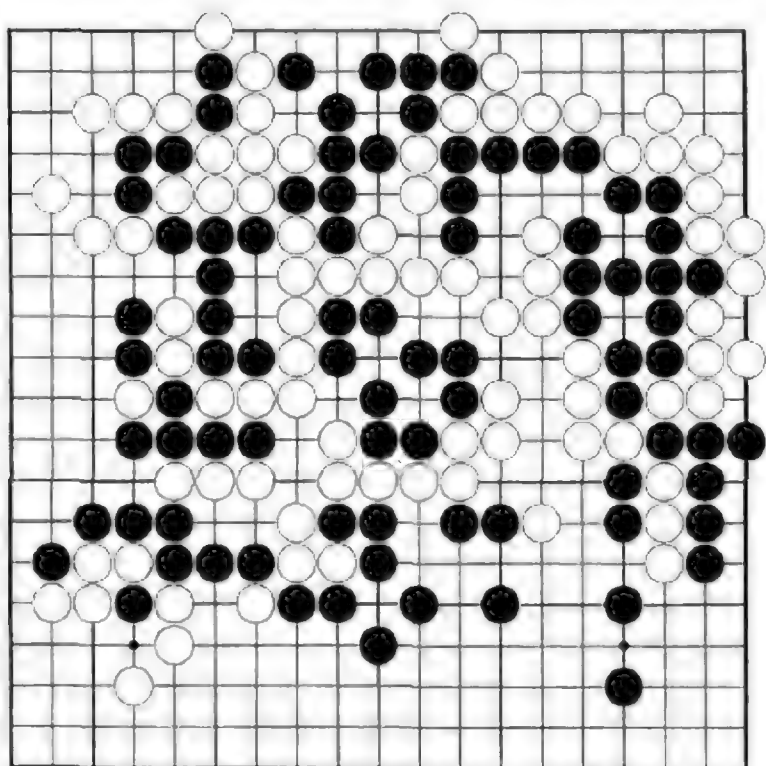
Dia. 3

shock in store for him.

Dia. 2. Black ataris at 1, forcing White 2.

Dia. 3. The throw-in at 3 finishes White off: he puts himself in atari whichever stone he captures. In other words, Black 3 sets up a double snapback.

8. Living with a false eye



Pattern 13. White to play and live

To close off, we would like to show you something really out of the ordinary, something that defies one of the basic laws of go.

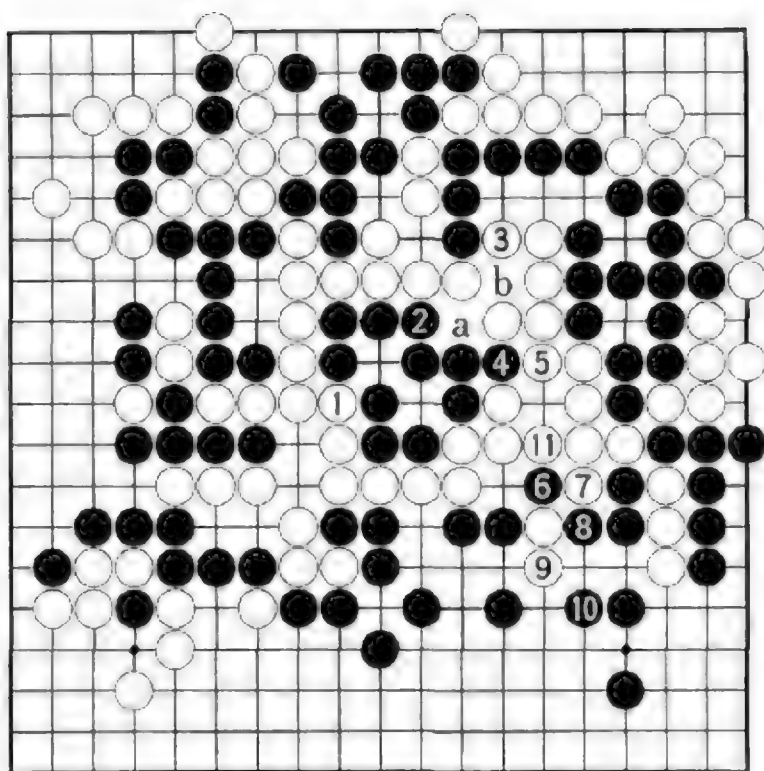
The game in Pattern 13 was played between Shinohara 9-dan (white) and Ishigure, then 8-dan. The small black group in the centre has two eyes, but if you look closely at the white group surrounding it, you'll realize that something is very fishy.

Before looking at the next diagram, see if you can determine the fate of this group if White plays first.

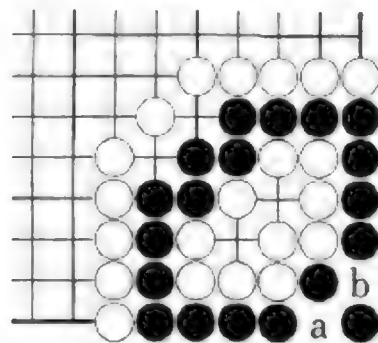
Dia. 1. This is what happened in the game. White lives with the sequence to 11!

Eh? Doesn't the point at 'b' becomes a false eye if Black plays at 'a'?

It certainly looks like a false eye, but White is unperturbed. The chain of white stones is



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

linked up with the bottom part of White's group in such a way that Black can never put the 'false' eye in atari. In other words, White is able to live with one real eye and one false eye.

In the past go theorists have worked out positions in which a group lives with one or even two false eyes, but pulling it off in a game could well be unprecedented.

Dia. 2. This is the standard example of this pattern. Here, of course, Black lives with two 'false eyes'; since White can never atari, 'a' and 'b' serve just as well as real eyes.

If you keep your eyes open, you may come up with some equally strange and wonderful shapes in your own games.

('Igo Club', January 1979. Translated by John Power.)



The Fascination of the Jubango

by Fujii Masayoshi

In the Edo period (1600–1868), when there were no organized tournaments with sponsors like the modern newspaper tournaments, jubangos or ten-game matches between two players were one of the main ways of settling personal rivalries in the go world. No jubango has been played for over 30 years now, but in the second quarter of this century the jubango enjoyed a revival. This was mainly due to the preeminence of one man, Go Seigen, and the efforts of the Yomiuri newspaper to find worthy opponents for him. For various reasons, Go Seigen did not play in the Honinbo tournament, which for most of this period was the only newspaper tournament in existence, but he was recognized as the top player of the day, so the only way for a challenger to test his mettle against him was in a one-on-one match.

This history of modern jubangos mainly focusses on the career of Go Seigen, but the first section, presented in this issue, gives a brief survey of go history and describes an unusual jubango played in the 1920's. The author, Fujii Masayoshi, is a veteran go journalist who is head of the go section of the Yomiuri and who played a major role in founding the Kisei (literally 'go saint') title, which is the top professional title in Japan. His history of modern jubangos appeared in the Yomiuri in 29 instalments in 1983, shortly after Cho Chikun won the Kisei title from Fujisawa Shuko.

Go World has already published, in issues 35 and 36, a biography of Go Seigen, but we think that the reader will find Fujii's account complements the earlier one. We have added some illustrative games. (Ed.)

1. The bloodthirsty 'uchikomi' system

In the best-of-seven challenge match that decides the Kisei, the top go player in Japan, the challenger Cho Chikun, holder of the Meijin, Honinbo and Judan titles, has defeated the champion Fujisawa Shuko 4–3 and realized his long-cherished ambition of taking the top title. Moreover, he did it in spectacular fashion, winning four games in a row after losing the first three. The thrill and excitement of this title match were probably shared by go fans and non-players alike. [The match is covered in GW31.]

Despite his reputation for unconventionality and his dubious renown as 'the drunken go player', Shuko held on to the number one title for the six years since its inception, but finally he has been vanquished. Regardless of whether he was ahead or behind in a best-of-seven series, Shuko would always whip himself on with the words, 'A best-of-seven series is not over until you've won four games.' This time securing the fourth win was beyond his power — he was crushed by the weight of that final elusive win.

At present, there are 13 titles: five open titles, headed by the Kisei, followed in order by the Meijin, Honinbo, Judan, and Tengen, and two semi-open titles, the Oza and the Gosei; various



Fujisawa Shuko — in his younger days he was known for his 'abnormal perception', not because of the strangeness of his play but because of his deeper insight into the essential nature of the game. Since his loss of the Kisei title and a major stomach operation soon afterwards, he has not taken a title, but his results are still quite respectable.

TV and minor tournaments make up the total. All except the TV titles and the junior Shinjin-O

(king of the new stars, open to players under 36 years of age and 8-dan in rank) tournament are run on the challenger system, with the winner attaining glory in the shape of the title. The loser can always hope to do better next time; if he loses the following year, he can pin his hopes on the year after that.

However, the ten- or 20-game match with the 'uchikomi' (literally 'beating down', i.e., forcing the opponent to take a handicap) system ended with nothing but dishonour for the loser. This is because the conditions of play were different; when one player fell four games behind — let's say 0-4 or 5-9 — the handicap was changed.

For example, if the match had begun on even, with the players alternating colours, the losing player would have to switch to the B-W-B handicap (called sen-ai-sen) used in the case of a 1-dan difference in strength. That means that the losing player would now take black in two games out of three, the sequence being: black, white, black, black, white, black. If he fell another four games behind, he would then have to take black in all games (called 'josen', this is the handicap for a 2-dan difference in strength). This is called being 'beaten down' (uchikomareru). Such a condition of play adds to the interest for the spectator, but the humiliation for the loser surpasses the imagination. That is why the



Cho Chikun — when he won the Meijin title in 1980, some go journalists wrote that he aimed at a go without individuality. As he put it, 'I try to match strength with strength, lightness with lightness. My ideal is to play in such a way that no one can tell who the player was.' This declaration only demonstrated the extent of his self-confidence, for it implied becoming a master of every kind of strategy.

'uchikomi' system has popularly been considered so bloodthirsty.

In the period before and after the war, from the mid-1930's to the mid-1950's, one player forced all the top players in Japan down to the B-W-B handicap. This player was Go Seigen.

2. The violent struggles for godokoro

Japanese history joins world history in 57 A.D., when it is recorded in a Chinese chronicle that the 'slave king' of Japan sent tribute to the Latter Han dynasty, in return for which he received a gold seal from Emperor Guangwu certifying the king as the ruler of Japan. The transmission of go to Japan is said to have taken place some centuries later, in the 5th or 6th century. However, it was not until the time of Honinbo Sansa (1557-1623) that go really achieved a secure place in history.

At the end of the Period of the Country at War (a period of civil war lasting from the late 15th century to the mid-16th century), the first player in the history of Japanese go worthy of being called a master made his appearance. This was the Buddhist priest Nikkai, who lived in the Honinbo, the name of one of seven pavilions in

the grounds of the Jakkoji temple in Kyoto.

Oda Nobunaga, then the ruler of Japan, had heard of Nikkai and on the occasion of his visit to Kyoto in 1578, he summoned Nikkai to play a game with him. He was unable to win even on five stones and praised him as a 'master' (meijin). This is supposed to be the origin of the use of the term meijin in go, though this cannot be verified.

Another story in passing. On 1 June 1582 Nikkai played a game in Nobunaga's presence at the Honnoji temple in Kyoto. A triple ko arose, so the game ended with no result. The next morning Akechi Mitsuhide made a surprise attack on the Honnoji and killed Nobunaga, so thereafter a triple ko has been considered inauspicious. Even now, of course, a triple ko is rare and according to the Nihon Ki-in rules it is adjudicated

as no contest.

Nobunaga's successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, also took an interest in Nikkai and in 1588 held what we would now call a go tournament. Nikkai stood head and shoulders above the other players. Hideyoshi declared that Nikkai, who had in the meantime changed his name to Sansa, was the top player and decreed that the other players should play him on a handicap.

The next ruler of Japan, Tokugawa Ieyasu, also extended his patronage to go players. First, in 1603, he appointed Sansa to the newly created position of godokoro, thus putting him in charge of the go world. In 1612 he awarded stipends to seven go players and sanctioned the establishment of the iemoto (hereditary school)

3. Changing the handicap after four wins

It is usually said that the go population of Japan numbers ten million, out of a total population of 118,980,000 (as of 1 March 1983). This means that one out of every 12 persons, including newborn infants and bed-ridden old people, plays go, which I find hard to credit. However, it is certain that every day heated battles rage across the go board, whether in the 6,000 go clubs (Nihon Ki-in estimate) throughout the land or in the office or at home. 'One's go opponent — so unlikable, yet one's so glad to see him,' as the old senryu goes.

The system followed by nearly all amateurs is to change the handicap when one side takes a lead of three games (usually when he wins three in a row), but with professionals the lead has to be four games. To find out when this system started, we have to go back over three hundred years in go history.

The earliest surviving record of the uchikomi system occurs in connection with a 29-game match between Sanchi (1617–1703), the 2nd head of the Yasui house, and Doetsu (1636–1727), the 3rd Honinbo, which began in October 1688. [For an account of the match, see 'Page from Go History', GW10.] Doetsu applied to challenge Sanchi when the government appointed the latter to the post of godokoro.

The match began with Doetsu, then 7-dan, playing on josen (black in all games). By the 16th game, he had scored nine wins, three losses, and four jigos (drawn games), thus taking a lead

system for go. This was how the four go houses or go schools of the Edo period — Honinbo, Inoue, Yasui, and Hayashi — came into being.

The godokoro had to be a player outstanding in skill; moreover, there were only three ways one could obtain the office: appointment by the shogun, joint recommendation by the other go players, or victory in a challenge match between two rivals. However, once one was appointed to the office, one monopolized the promotions of all go players and the issuing of diplomas, so the competition for the office and its privileges was very fierce. Edo go history can be called the history of the struggles over this post. It is against this background that the uchikomi system was born.

of six games. He applied for a change in the handicap, 'according to the established practice', and this was granted. This is evidence that the general practice in this period was to change the handicap when one side took a lead of six games. In the middle of the Edo period, a controversy arose over whether the lead should be four games or six, but by the end of the Edo period four had become standard. This practice was continued in the Meiji period (1868–1912).

However, when the splintered go world came together on the occasion of the great earthquake in 1923 and founded the Nihon Ki-in, all the previous handicaps based on the uchikomi system were declared void.

For professional go players, the results and dan ranks that they had achieved according to the uchikomi system were their most precious assets. [Players kept track of their records against other players; since there was no rating tournament, these records were taken into account when deciding promotions.] In the case of a player who had taken a lead against other players, this was equivalent to being deprived of the basis of his livelihood. [The best example is that of Suzuki Tamejiro 6-dan. He had won two games in a row on black against Shusai Meijin (actually he performed this feat when he was only 4-dan), so he was within sight of going to even with the only 9-dan. When the Ki-in was founded, he had to revert to the handicap for a 3-dan difference, that is black—two stones—

black. Segoe Kensaku, then also 6-dan, was in a similar position with Shusai. Both players were bitter about this for a long time, though of course starting afresh was the only practical approach when founding the new body and starting a rating tournament.] This decision to wipe the slate clean had a subtle effect on the subsequent collective and disintegrative tendencies in the go world; putting this aside, the institution that revived the uchikomi system was

the Yomiuri newspaper.

The first application was in the ten-game match (jubango) between the Nihon Ki-in 7-dan Suzuki Tamejiro and Nozawa Chikuchō 7-dan of the Kiseisha, a body made up of players expelled from the Nihon Ki-in. [Five players were expelled in October 1924, because they ignored the Nihon Ki-in rules and made a private contract with a newspaper, the Hochi Shimbun.]

4. The Clash between Suzuki and Nozawa

On 7 March 1927, the first game of the first jubango of the Showa era (1926 to present) began in the special playing room on the roof of the Yomiuri newspaper building in the present Ginza.

After reaching 5-dan, Nozawa had contracted a chest illness and retired to Kobe to recuperate. He was dragged out of retirement by the Kiseisha, which gave him a 6-dan diploma, then further promoted him to 7-dan. This two-step promotion without playing one game, like an amateur's 'honorary diploma', aroused controversy. Of course, when he was 3- and 4-dan he had earned a reputation as 'the invincible general' or 'the devil general' because of his long string of wins in a newspaper-sponsored tournament.

Suzuki had also had outstanding results when he was 3- and 4-dan — he was so formidable that he had acquired the nickname of 'the general of the rising sun'. However, Nozawa was apparently his most dangerous foe, and in the previous decade he had been forced to the handicap of black—two stones—black (the handicap for a 3-dan difference), so this ten-game series was spoken of as a grudge match. It attracted as much attention as the famous game, also sponsored by the Yomiuri, between Meijin-Honinbo Shusai and Karigane the year before. [This was the first game in the historic team match between the Nihon Ki-in and the Kiseisha; Karigane lost on time, but he was behind anyway.]

The Yomiuri commissioned the writer Muramatsu Shofu to write the commentary on the first game. In the 10 March issue of the Yomiuri, he wrote as follows:

'A cup of good quality tea,' demanded Noza-

wa. 'You can't start a game of go immediately after you arrive, like getting on a train. Having a cup of tea and smoking a cigarette first is simple etiquette for a go player. It'd be even better if there was sake to drink.'

'Are you a strong drinker?' someone asked.

'Ah, when it comes to sake I'm a meijin. No one would object to my calling myself 7-dan there.'

'How many years is it since you last played Suzuki?'

'Well, I wonder. I don't remember.'

'It was in 1914,' answered Suzuki.

'That's 13 years then.'

'Could it really be that long? I haven't played one game in all that time — I've forgotten how to. He [motioning towards Suzuki with his jaw] has been doing nothing but study go these 13 years.'

But Nozawa didn't mean to imply that he would have any trouble because of this.

5. The unprecedented separate-rooms game

We would like to present another quote from Muramatsu's account of the Suzuki—Nozawa jubango.

Nozawa's skin is pale, his hair is a little thin on top, and his eyes are as big as saucers. There is something droll in his manner, as if he thinks you a fool. But there is something appealing about him that stops him from appearing arrogant. Occasionally he'll make witty jokes. Anyway, you get the impression that he makes light of his opponent, that he is a free spirit soaring through the heavens.

His opponent, Suzuki, is the complete opposite.

He is the epitome of simplicity, taciturnity, dignity, seriousness. He thinks deeply, silently, is in no hurry to play his moves. When he does play, he does so calmly. The two make an interesting contrast.

I do not know who is the stronger. In determining the issue of a contest, luck also plays its part.

This jubango is also noted for the unprecedented fashion in which it was played, with the players in different rooms.

The two sat at separate go boards on the far sides of adjacent rooms. The paper sliding door between the two rooms was opened about a metre, so each player could see the other in the distance. The game recorder moved from room to room relaying the moves.

The reason for this, it is said, was not simply Suzuki's fears about Nozawa's tuberculosis; he also hoped to seal Nozawa's pesky mouth. The story was that Suzuki had done so badly against Nozawa in the past because he had been tormented by his poisonous tongue. Off the board Nozawa would resort to the verbal tactics so frequently employed in amateur games.

Either because of his illness or the 13-year blank in his career, Nozawa started badly; he did win the 1st and 3rd games, in which he had black, but he suffered three losses in a row in the 4th to 6th games. The 7th game was a draw (jigo), but he also lost the 8th game, so he was faced with a kadoban (a game in which a loss would change the handicap). He scraped by with a another jigo in the 9th game, but then his tuberculosis worsened, and he died in January of 1931.

The first jubango of the Showa era had lasted three and a half years. Because of Nozawa's death, it ended in pathos rather than in blood being spilled, but because he died when he did Nozawa at least avoided the indignity of being forced to a handicap. The next jubango, between Go Seigen and Kitani Minoru, was different: the result was a tragedy for one of the players.

(Translated by John Power)

Suzuki-Nozawa, Game Seven

For Nozawa, this jubango was the culmination of a rebellious career. Born in 1881, he had become a disciple of Honinbo Shuei and by 1915

had reached 5-dan. In 1918 he founded a magazine, *Go Criticism*, in which he published a series of articles which brought the wrath of the go establishment down on his head and earned him a unique place in go history. In this series, entitled 'Commentary on a Commentary', he criticised game commentaries by Honinbo Shusai and Nakagawa Kamesaburo II (then head of the Hoensha go group). This was an act of unprecedented boldness. He was admonished by letter (dated 5 December 1918) by the Honinbo school, and since he made no response, he was expelled from the school on 16 December. It was not until 1923, when various groups were making attempts to unify the go world, that a reconciliation was arranged. His magazine lasted until the great earthquake of September 1923. Nozawa seems to have had an antipathy towards authority, but Iwamoto mentions in his autobiography that he was popular with the younger players.

In contrast, Suzuki Tamejiro was a scholarly player who was a pillar of the go establishment. Born in 1883, he at first intended to be a soldier, then a doctor, and studied go at the Hoensha merely as a hobby. He became so absorbed in go that he forgot to make his application to sit for the entrance examinations to the top high school in time, so he decided to switch over to go completely. In 1910 he was promoted to 4-dan at the Hoensha, but in 1914 he emigrated to Singapore to run a rubber plantation. A drastic slump in rubber prices the following year made him return to Japan. In 1917 he attempted to set himself up again in business in Singapore, but once again did badly and returned to Japan in 1919. In the 1930's he compiled the monumental *Encyclopedia of Go* in six volumes, which is still in print (he published a revised edition in 1960). One of his many pupils was Kitani Minoru. He died in November 1960.

When the Kiseisha enlisted Nozawa and promoted him to 7-dan, there was much debate within the Nihon Ki-in as to whether they should recognize this ranking. The problem was solved when Suzuki stepped forward and volunteered to play him. Ironically, Suzuki was one of the five players who originally left the Ki-in in October 1924 to form the Kiseisha. He had been persuaded to return 18 months later and, perhaps as reward, had soon after been promoted to 7-dan.

White: Suzuki Tamejiro 7-dan

Black: Nozawa Chikuchō 7-dan

No komi. Serialized in the Yomiuri from 26 February to 19 March 1929.

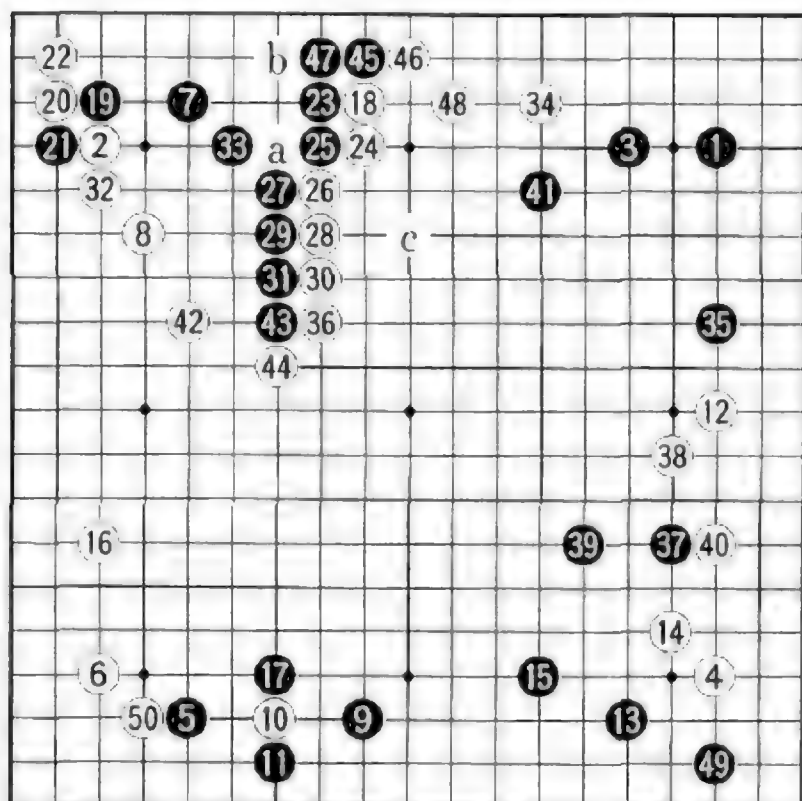


Figure 1 (1 - 50)

Figure 1 (1 - 50).

Nozawa's play in this game lacks the aggressiveness of his younger days, but that must be attributed to the progress of his illness. He did well to withstand the pressures on him and secure a jigo.

Black's strategy is to secure the bottom up to 17 and to parry the attack at the top with the 21-23 combination. White 22 and 24 offer the strongest resistance.

Black 33 is a little too passive. Instead, Black could try playing 45 and 47 immediately, the idea being to tenuki (switch elsewhere) if White defends at 48. White might counter by cutting at 'a' with 46, but then Black must fight with 'b'.

Black 35. Black should first hane at 36, forcing White 'c'.

Figure 2 (51 - 78)

Black 57, permitting White 58, is again too passive. Black should make a serious attempt to destroy the left-side territory by playing at 58 himself. White takes the lead with 60.

White 72 is a little greedy. White should secure the side with White 'a', Black 'b', White 'c'.

Black seizes his opportunity with 77.

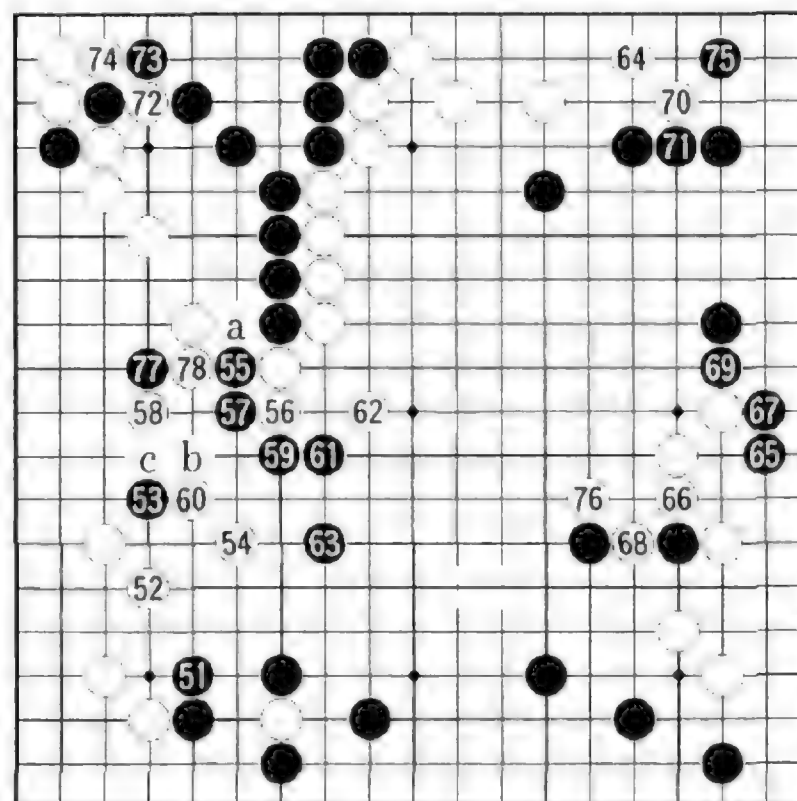


Figure 2 (51 - 78)

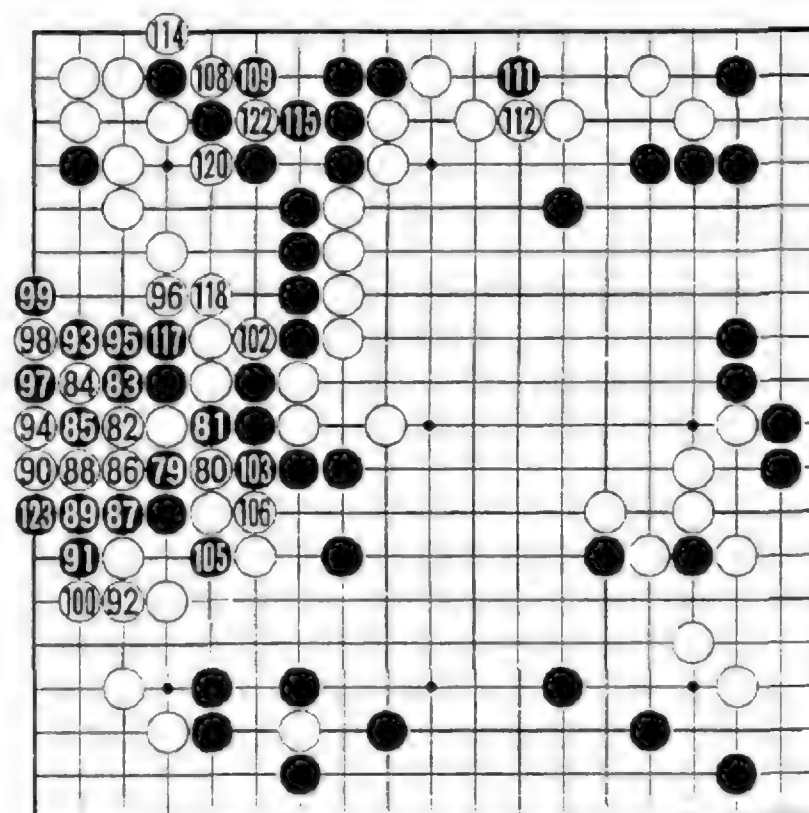


Figure 3 (79 - 124)

Ko: 101, 104, 107, 110, 113, 116, 119;
121: at 85; 124: connects (left of 122)

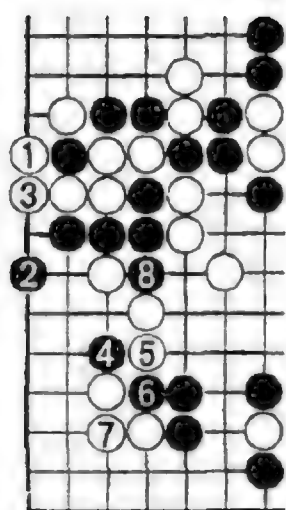
Figure 3 (79 - 124)

White 84. If at 85, Black will block at 84 in sente, then break into the side by attaching at 118.

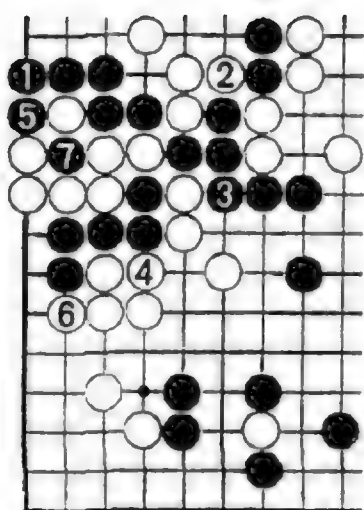
White 90. If White captures at 1 in Dia. 1, Black plays 2 in sente (threatening to get a ko by throwing in at 3), followed by 4. If White saves the corner with 7, Black escapes with 8.

Black 97. If at 98, a ko still follows as in Dia. 2.

Black gains in the exchange to 27 in the next figure. This makes the game even.



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

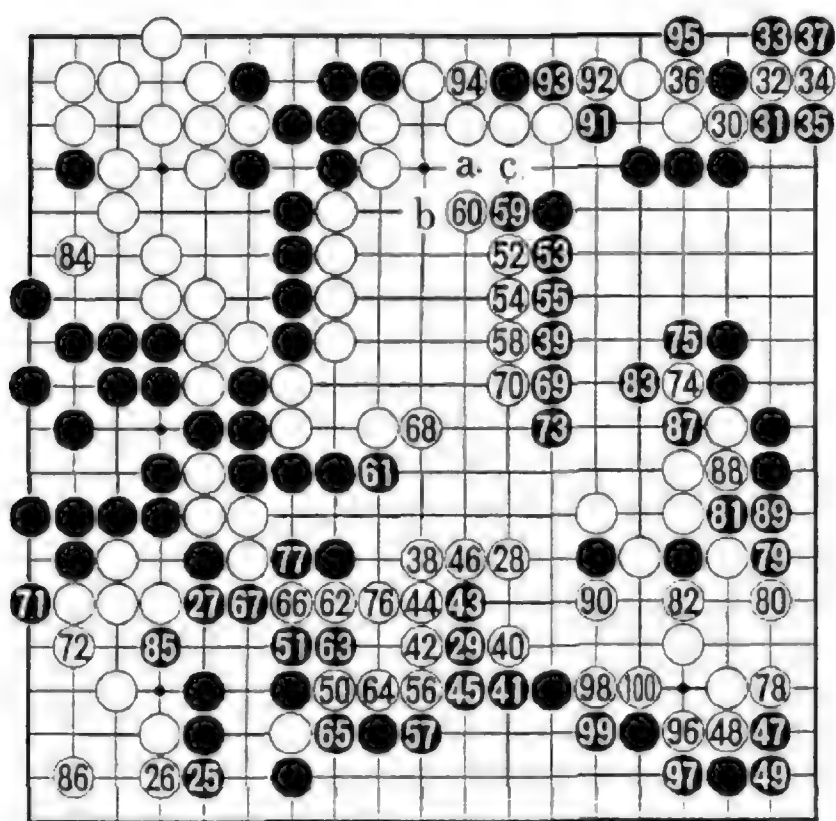


Figure 4 (125 – 200)

Figure 4 (125 – 200)

White 38 and Black 39 are more or less miai, but 38 at 55 would be a little bigger.

Figure 5 (201 – 266). Result a jigo.

The Nihon Ki-in–Kiseisha Match

This unfinished jubango took three years to play. After his win with black in the third game, Nozawa was unable to win again. Suzuki took the series 5–2, a triumph not only for him but also for the Nihon Ki-in.

This jubango actually started half a year after the famous team match between the Nihon Ki-in and the Kiseisha, the result of which was also a victory for the Nihon Ki-in, 26 wins to 14 losses and 2 jigos. The Kiseisha was of course at a numerical disadvantage, because it could only field four players to the Nihon Ki-in's 16. The Kiseisha started off badly, which is why they felt the need to call on Nozawa for reinforcement.

The Kiseisha members were Karigane Jun'ichi

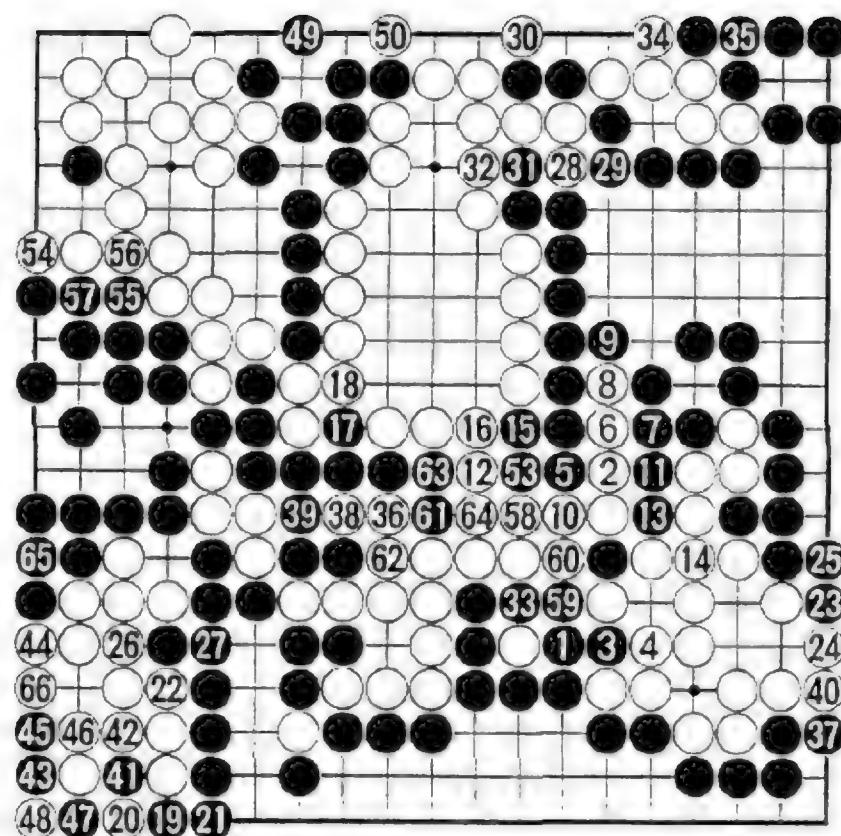


Figure 5 (201 – 266)

51: ko (at 47); 52: connects (at 41)

7-dan, Onoda Chiyotaro 6-dan, Takabe Dohei 6-dan, and, from part way, Nozawa (he scored 4–4, the best record for his team). The Nihon Ki-in team was headed by Shusai, who only played in the first game against Karigane, Segoe 7-dan, Iwamoto Kaoru 6-dan, and Miyasaka 6-dan.

The system was a knockout: each player kept going until he lost. The games were played with handicaps, so the Ki-in players, most of whom were 3- and 4-dan, had black in most of their games. The star for the Ki-in side was the young Kitani Minoru, then 4-dan, who had a streak of ten wins and two jigos. Since at this stage there were only three players in the Kiseisha team, that meant that he played the whole team three times before Karigane was finally able to defeat him. The player who gave the Nihon Ki-in team its good start was the young Hashimoto Utaro, then 4-dan, who followed Shusai's win over Karigane by defeating Onoda and Takabe before losing to Karigane.

The result of this match played an important part in securing the base of the Nihon Ki-in. The fragmentary and divisive nature of the go world in the first three decades of this century had made the ideal of unity seem an illusion, but thereafter the Nihon Ki-in grew and prospered. It was not to meet another serious threat to its unity till the Kansai Ki-in split off in 1950, but although this split was a permanent one, it did not threaten its stability.

Redmond v. Otake

Michael Redmond is not winning any titles yet, but his results are well above par for a 5-dan. His record so far this year (as of 19 November) is 17 wins to 8 losses, which actually is the fourth-best of the 37 5-dans at the Nihon Ki-in. More important than the win-loss tally, however, is one's record in the promotion tournament or Oteai and reaching the final rounds of the newspaper tournaments, which is where one runs into the top players. In the Oteai, Michael is doing fine with a 9-1 record, which puts him on course for promotion to 6-dan next year. In the newspaper tournaments, Michael is also having some modest success: this year he won his way

into the third preliminary rounds of both the Judan and Honinbo tournaments. Unfortunately, he found the going tougher there, but in the Judan he had the good fortune to be matched against Otake Hideo. He lost, but the opportunity of playing a great player like Otake does not come along very often for a 5-dan. It is only by playing the top players that one gets the experience necessary to join their ranks. Michael was not very proud of his game, but we prevailed upon him to give us a commentary. Even if the game does not show him at his best, the record is still of interest to go fans.

White: Otake Hideo 9-dan

Black: Michael Redmond 5-dan

3rd preliminary round of the 26th Judan tournament. Played on 9 April 1987.

Commentary by Michael Redmond.

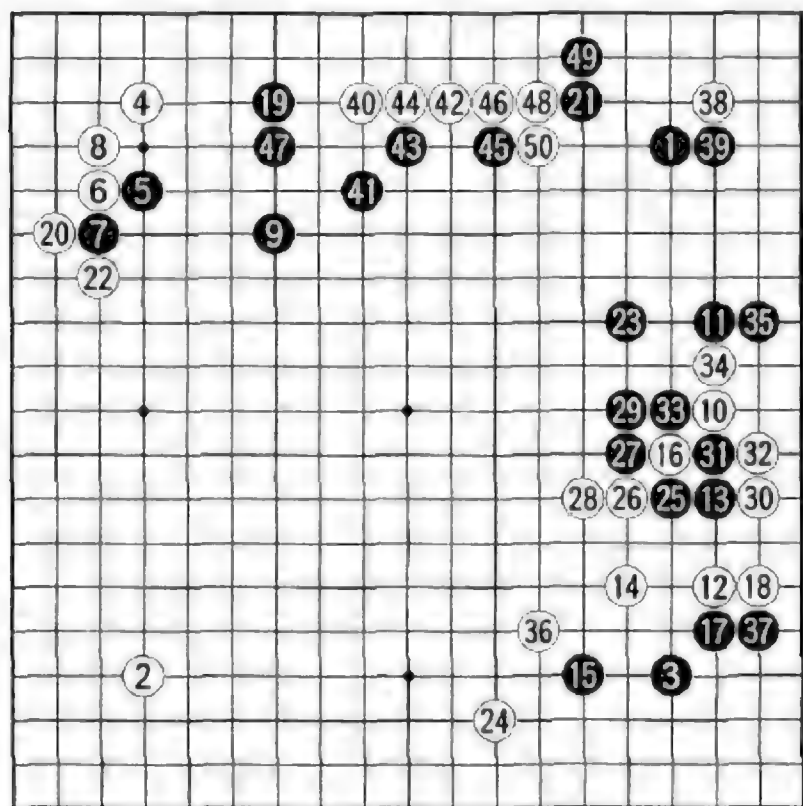


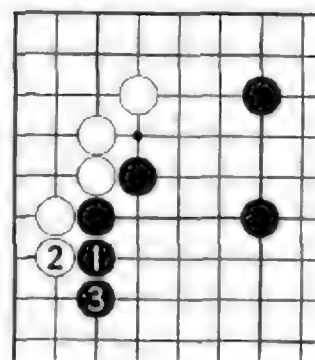
Figure 1 (1 - 50)

Figure 1 (1 - 50)

Black 1-9 was my favorite fuseki at the time. After 9, Black 33 and Black 19 are miai.

Black 21 was a thin move. I should have played as in Dia. 1.

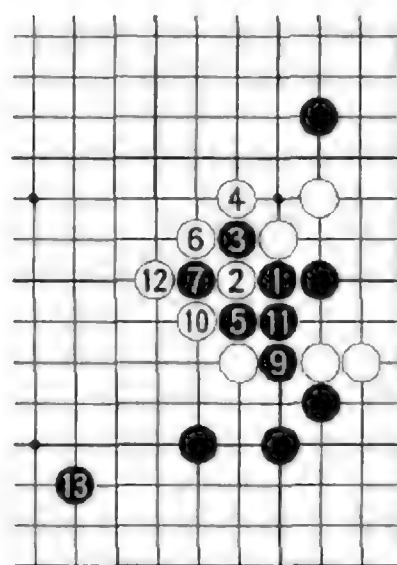
Black 23 was also a bad move. I should have pushed through and cut immediately as in Dia. 2. The trade to 13 there would give me enough territory to compensate for any damage White could do to my moyo on the upper side. If White



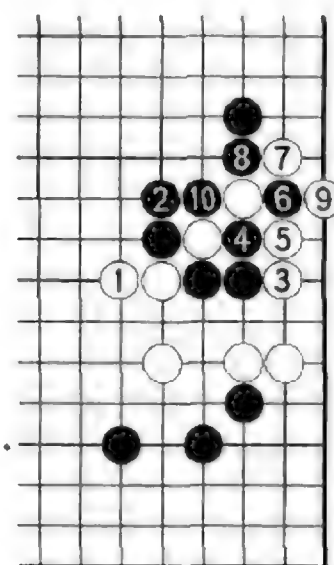
Dia. 1

4 at 1 in Dia. 3, I would squeeze from 2 to 10 and gain a move compared to the game.

White 40 hit the weak point in my upper side. Next, 41 and 42 were miai. I should have played 45 at 47.



Dia. 2



Dia. 3

8: connects

Figure 2 (51 - 100)

Black 89 was my last chance. Maybe I should have invaded at 92.

Figure 3 (101 - 140)

Black resigns after White 140.

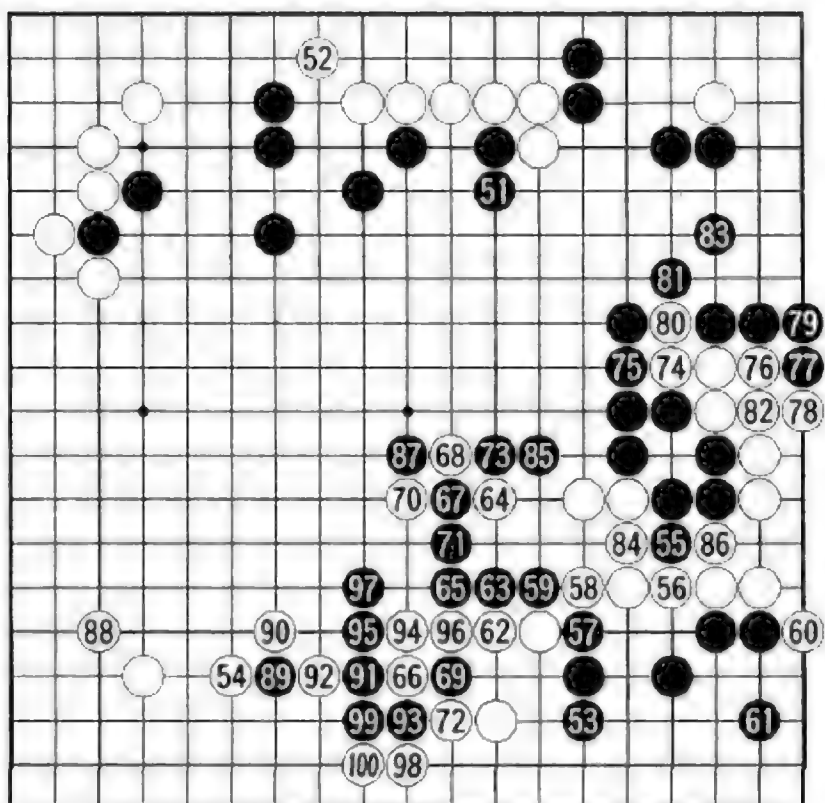


Figure 2 (51 – 100)

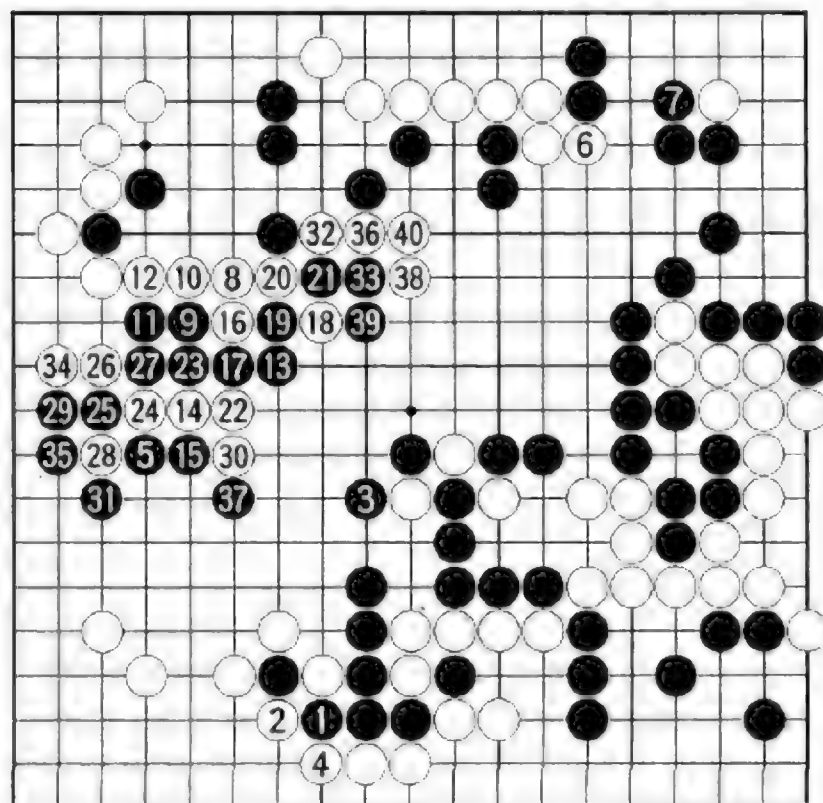
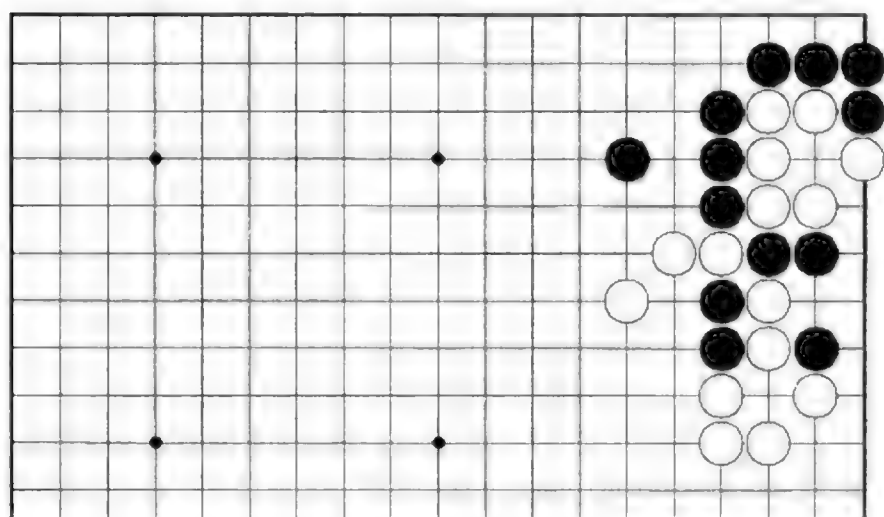


Figure 3 (101 – 140)

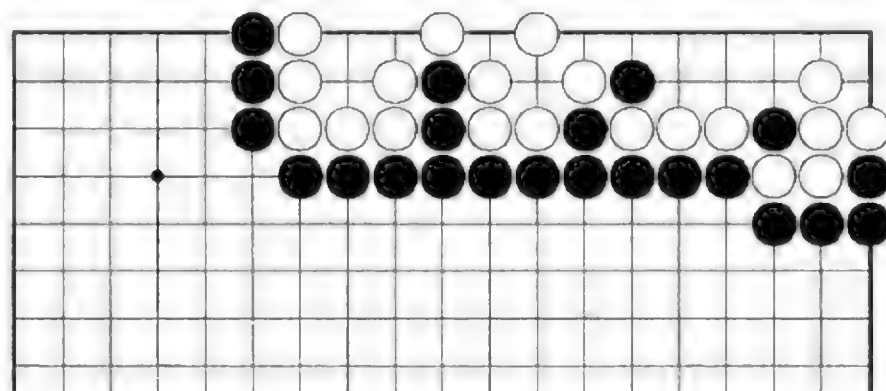
Ko Problems

The ko is the element of uncertainty that makes go so fascinating and yet so frustrating. In areas that you are certain you have already secured, suddenly you find yourself fighting a ko. Beginners often avoid kos because it is difficult to predict how a ko fight will turn out, but this kind of timidity will halt your progress.

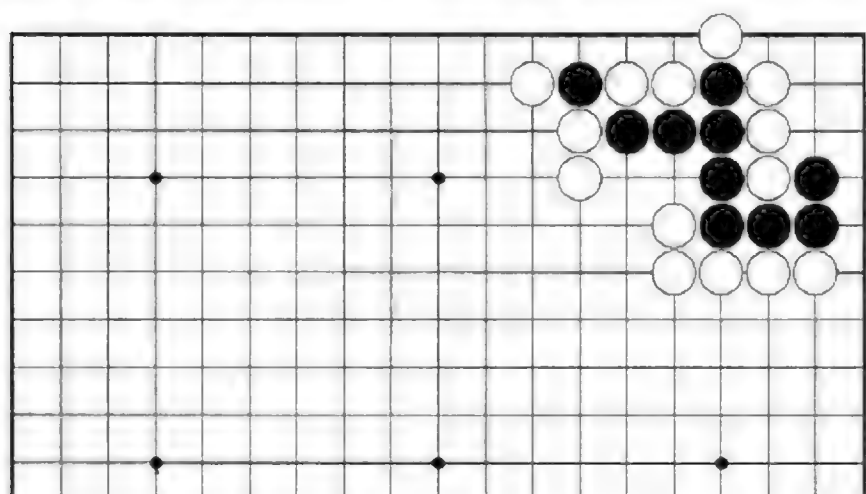
Your skill at fighting kos is a good index of your overall go strength. If you want to get stronger, you have to improve your ko technique. You could start by grappling with the problems below, which are all middle kyu (6- to 4-kyu) level. In each case, Black plays first and gets a ko.



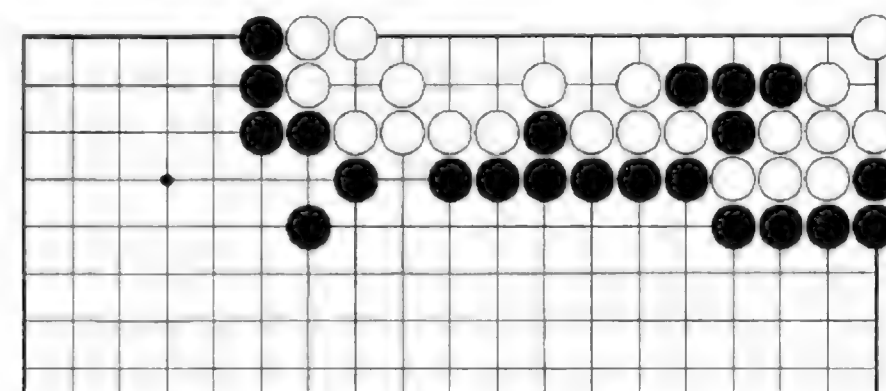
1. What is the vital point for Black?



2. Black can exploit White's shortage of liberties to set up a ko.



3. Black doesn't have even one eye, but the right move will give him a ko for life.



4. Black seems helpless because of his shortage of liberties, but again the right move will give him a ko.

Answers on page 41.

Tales of Men Crazy about Go

Nakayama Noriyuki

In 1984, Nakayama Noriyuki, who must be one of the most prolific writers ever to appear among the ranks of professional go players, past and present, published at his own expense a beautifully printed collection of essays entitled The Treasure Chest Enigma. This book enjoyed a success d'estime among discerning go fans in the West, though the author's extravagance makes it unlikely that it has been a financial success. It still remains the only collection

of go essays published in English, and we recommend it to beginners and advanced players alike.

The short essays presented below are taken from Tales of Men Crazy about Go, the sequel to the collection that was the source of The Treasure Chest Enigma, and they were likewise first published in the Nihon Ki-in magazine Igo Club. They afford some unfamiliar glimpses into the world of go.

One's Whole Body and Soul in One Move

One day, unexpectedly. . .

For a professional go player, there is no such thing as a game he doesn't mind losing, but there are times when the luck just doesn't run your way — in a competitive profession you can't always get what you want.

Having said that, in a long professional career every go player will probably play one or two games that at whatever cost he intensely desires to win.

Such a game might be, for example, a game that earns him promotion or that enables him to make the breakthrough into a league — such a game might be so important that it becomes a crossroads in his career. Then his eyes will shine fiercely and he will fight with all the strength in his body.

Professionals say that the happiest day of their life was when they became shodan. This is affirmed even by eminent 9-dans who have taken stacks of titles. What this implies is that the one time in his life that a professional feels he has to win whatever happens is in the promotion tournament for qualifying as a professional. And in fact there are all kinds of heartbreaking stories associated with this professional examination, in which young geniuses aged from ten to 17 or 18 confront each other with their youthful blood boiling furiously in their veins. It sometimes seems to me that in this world, so full of fakery and fixed matches, the only genuine contests are this qualifying tournament and the high school baseball tournaments.

A long, long time ago — well, this story goes



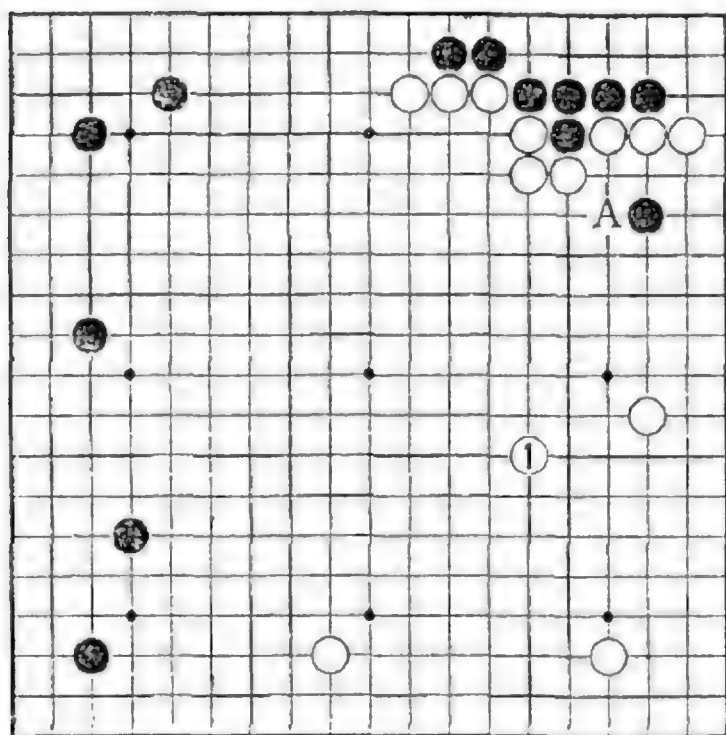
Nakayama 5-dan

For the past five years, Nakayama Noriyuki has spent each summer making go instruction tours, many of them at his own expense, of Europe and the U.S.A. He has become one of the best-known Japanese go professionals in the West and has accumulated an enormous number of disciples.

as far back as 1932 or 1933, anyway — there were no time limits in the qualifying tournaments.

The exam days were Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, that is, the games were played at the rate of three a week. On a certain day of a certain month 50 years ago, young Hoshino made his appearance for the qualifying tournament. He says that he is sure that it was a Tuesday. Nowadays he is an imposing player, a dignified master of his profession, and is known to his friends as 'the boss of Koshu', but at the time I imagine he was a fresh-faced lad whom everyone called Young Toshi.

The diagram below shows his game that day. About one hour had passed since the commencement. The hane of White 1 played by Hoshino, probationary shodan,* was the start of an historical incident.



24 hours for two moves

At this point, the boy playing black sank into deep thought.

Properly speaking, extending at Black A is considered to be the only move; if you were intent on doing something different, about the only other possibility is blocking at B. His opponent was, of course, well aware of this. Taking a long time to consider something he already knew meant that he was taking advantage of the absence of time limits to challenge Hoshino to a test of endurance.

Soon it was noon. There was a break until one o'clock for lunch. Naturally the boy was not yet ready to play. Two hours on the move would hardly be enough to startle Hoshino.

The time for the dinner recess came. The two probationary shodans were still sitting formally, competing to see who had the greater endurance.

Around eight thirty that night the lad picked up a black stone and with a loud click extended at A. He had actually invested eight hours of thought on this move.

'I was quite impressed — eight hours is quite something. Well, now it was my turn to play. I should just have extended inside at B without thinking, but that wouldn't have shown much fighting spirit.



Hoshino Toshi 9-dan

Born in May 1918 in Otsuki City in Yamanashi prefecture, an area traditionally known as Koshu. He became shodan in 1939, and reached 9-dan in 1977. He played in the 26th Honinbo (1977) and 12th Meijin (1972) leagues; in 1966 he won the 10th Kodansha (high-ranked players) tournament. Hoshino used to live in the countryside and at one time was known for riding a horse to the local station. He retired in March 1984. In 1985 he won a tournament for retired players, the 1st Senior Tournament.

'My teacher had told me that if my opponent took an hour over his move, I should return the courtesy by taking twice as long, but I had trouble making the calculations. Ha, ha, ha.

'I knew that twice eight hours was 16 hours, but it was now 8:30 at night. At midnight there was a break of 30 minutes for supper, so if you omitted that and added one whole revolution of the small hand on the watch, you came to the break for lunch the next day . . . The time for extending at White B would be 2 p.m. the next day.

'It was my teacher's strict injunction (?), so it couldn't be helped. I couldn't just play. (laughs)

'After a while my opponent became tired and started nodding off. I would fidget as if I were just about to play. He would wake up. I of course would not play. No, I couldn't play.'

Hoshino looked thoroughly disgusted as he recalled the scene. The game was not decided until Thursday morning. According to Hoshino, it was just before the next game was due to begin.

A frightening war of attrition

Well, the Thursday game began. Hoshino's next opponent had thought of the same tactic. To begin with, young Hoshino had stayed up all night for two nights in a row on the Tuesday and Wednesday. Opting for a contest in stamina was the natural joseki in the circumstances. It was an important game; failing or succeeding to become professional shodan now might determine the course of a lifetime. It's hard luck for Hoshino, but I have to take the win anyway I can get it — this was perhaps how he reasoned.

Thursday of course turned into an all-night session.

So too did Friday.

The outcome of the game was decided on Saturday morning — barely in time for the third game to begin. The tournament had turned into a ferocious contest.

The third game continued all night Saturday night. And Sunday night too.

Only two players were able to stand up to this spell of six days without sleep: they were Hoshino Toshi 9-dan and my teacher, Suzuki Goro 7-dan. One of their fellow probationary shodans in this qualifying tournament was Sakata Eio, who later established himself as one of the greats of go history. As far as go strength went, he was clearly one of the leading candidates to qualify as a professional, but he was still young and he did not have the stamina to fight on equal terms. He missed out on qualifying two years in a row because his wilier opponents

dragged him into this fearsome war of attrition. He just barely made it the third year. Even a prodigy like Sakata found himself outdone.

Worried that their pupils would kill each other off, the teachers got together and decided to import chess clocks from Germany. Apparently these chess clocks were first used for the qualifying tournament around 1935.

'Sakata was small, but he was really strong. If you played at the same rate as he did, you couldn't expect to win. That's why we decided on the safety-first policy of a time contest. When it got late at night, he would often grumble: "Come on, Goro, play faster." But if I had played fast, I would have had the worst of it, so I didn't fall for that. "Not ready yet," I'd reply and I'd keep thinking until he couldn't see any more.'

Suzuki's recollections agree with Hoshino's story. So it would seem that the reason why chess clocks came to be used in the games of these players who were not even proper professionals yet was the dogged persistence of people like Hoshino and Suzuki.

It's easy to say eight hours, to write 16 hours. There can be few people who know just how arduous it is to sit so long in front of a go board. Perhaps go professionals are engaged in a struggle with the go board until they die.

(Translated by John Power)

*All the players participating in the tournament are assigned the rank of 'probationary shodan'.

Life or Death?

Again, one day unexpectedly . . .

'Manchuria's red setting sun, Mongolia . . .'
If you are a Japanese born in the opening years of the current, Showa (1926—), era or earlier, you may recall the words and melody of that song.

Hoshino 1-dan was watching the sun sink below the horizon across a great, limitless plain. Both earth and sky blazed crimson that evening in Manchuria. The breeze had calmed and the first stars had appeared. In this vast, pebble-strewn desert, where blades of grass grew few and far between, there was no way to tell where the border was.

It was 1939, at Nomonhan on the border

between the Soviet Union and Manchuria. Hoshino 1-dan was an army cavalryman. As might be imagined from his present physique, he had been a first-grade conscript and had been taken like a shot into the cavalry. This was only the natural joseki, but, the way these things turn out, it was just right for being assigned to the front lines.

At that time, of course, there were no hostilities between Japan and the Soviet Union. Furthermore, there were few people who wanted to violate the existing non-aggression pact, so Hoshino had not expected to find himself in such a dangerous situation.

Suddenly, one day, tiny black spots like poppy seeds appeared on the horizon. In no time the black spots grew to the size of small beans, and clouds of dust became visible. It was a large corps of Soviet tanks.

Various accounts are given in the history books, but the side taken by surprise in this border dispute was the Japanese Manchurian Army; it suffered a crushing defeat unparalleled in history. If one were to give a go analogy, it was a capturing race in which one side had an eye and the other didn't. Things might have been different if it had been a fight in the mountains with the Afghans, but this was a plain with no place to hide, and there was no way that tanks against cavalry could have been a fair match.

According to common sense, the tesuji would have been for the commander to summon all the men, have them slap their horses on the rear and retreat at full speed. Sadly, in the Imperial Army there was no such joseki.

The clarion call to assembly rang out over the desert. Hoshino's company of 600 cavalymen lined up their horses.

The order was given: 'All men dismount!' Was it to be surrender, then? No, it was 'Prepare for trench warfare!'

There was only time to dig a foxhole to hide your body before the enemy tanks drew near. Shovel-holding hands were lacerated; blood flowed. As many hand grenades as they could hold were distributed to the 600 men; silently they crouched, hidden in their foxholes. Then, before their eyes, blacking out the earth and sky, there appeared the vast horde of Soviet tanks.

The plan was that when a tank came within very close range, you would suddenly stand up and hurl a grenade into the caterpillar treads. If you scored a skillful hit, the tank would be immobilized, but this was a one in a thousand chance. It seemed only to be a tactic for gaining an honorable death.

If you die, you can't play go

The hail of bullets and shells seemed to overturn earth and sky. For a full two days, the tanks drove around over the soldiers' heads.

The lower half of Hoshino's body had been hit by fragments of tank shells and by pebbles driven into his flesh by explosions. He was

severely injured. What could he have been thinking as his consciousness ebbed away?

In his hand was his last remaining grenade. It was to be used for suicide. Strangely, he wasn't afraid to die, but for some reason it became a matter of wanting to play go.

If you die, you can't play go. But wouldn't death seem to be the only escape from such suffering? No, absolutely not! Hadn't he previously experienced worse suffering than this? What about the game from the qualifying tournament where 16 hours of thought had gone into one move. What about playing for six straight days without any sleep?

Hoshino Sensei suddenly felt better. In the dead of night, when all around it had grown quiet and the sound of the tanks had receded into the distance, he slowly crawled out of his foxhole and licked dew from the scattered blades of grass to keep alive. It was literally a transient-dew life.*

After three days friendly troops came to their aid, but of the 600 soldiers only 30 remained alive. Apparently a survival rate of just five percent qualifies as a complete massacre.

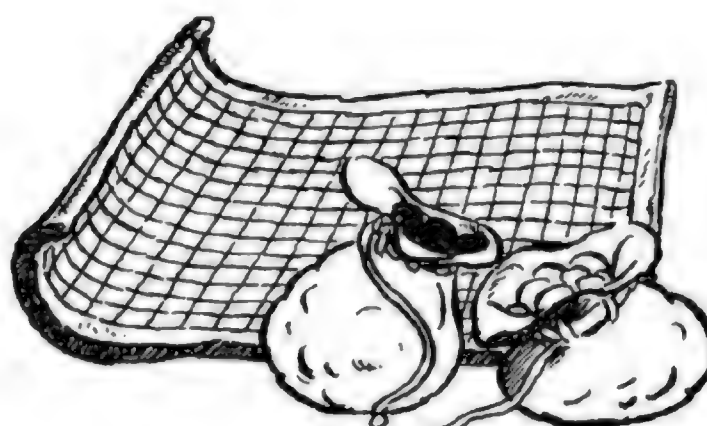
'It was really fortunate that I had learned go. Thanks to go, my life was saved.'

Hoshino 9-dan, at the lectern, linked his experiences in the shodan qualifying tournament with his war experiences in a deeply felt story. 'Since I had been spared, I felt that I had to enjoy go to the full,' he concluded.

In the summer of 1980, at the training course for Nagano prefecture middle and high school teachers in charge of go, the thunderous applause must have shaken the mountains.

(Translated by Robert McGuigan)

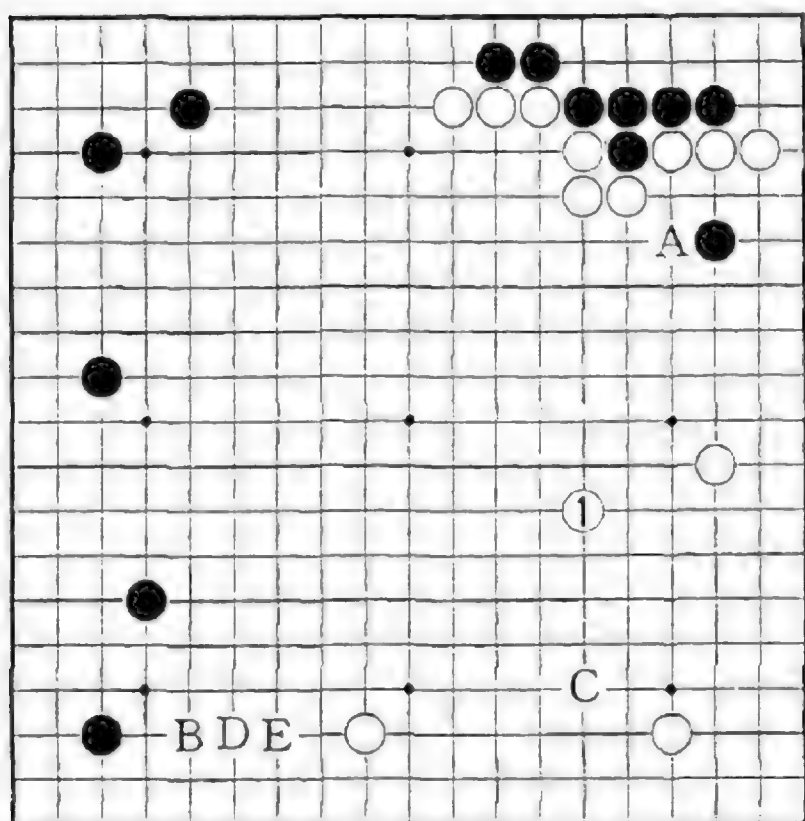
* The traditional saying is, 'life is as transient as the dew'. Here dew saves his life from being transient. (Ed.)



Enlightenment and Illusion

Last December (1979), I had occasion to visit Cho Chikun's home in Kisarazu in Chiba prefecture. When I had finished my business, I took advantage of the go board standing in front of me to ask for his instruction on a point.

Dia. 1 shows a game I had played two days earlier against Kanda Ei in the 4-dan section of the Kisei tournament. I had had no idea what my next move should be in this position. After dithering for about an hour I played at 1, but of course I had no confidence that this was the correct answer. Unashamedly I asked Cho Chikun, then holder of the Gosei title, what I should have done.



Dia. 1

The Gosei glared at my inept move. Or perhaps it might be more accurate to say that he was looking with pity. He lightly removed 1 from the board and placed it firmly at A.

'I'd like to see you have the confidence to win by making the diagonal connection here,' he muttered.

Naturally I had considered this move. In a fast game I might have played it without thinking twice. But still, however obvious it may be that it is the proper move (*honte*), I couldn't help feeling that it was too slow to play it at such an early stage in this *fuseki*. Despite the assistance from Cho Chikun, I still didn't understand the real value of A.

'H'm, really? I changed my mind from B to C to A to 1 and finally settled on the latter. Would



extending to B really be no good?' The lack of meekness in this question of mine only proved that I was too much of a duffer to understand the virtues of A.

The Gosei frowned at White B. Some 20 seconds went by. He then looked hard right into the duffer's face.

'White B is an extremely high-level move. Here the two-space extension to D would be a completely hopeless move. If Black invades at E when White has played B, a fight will start here. White's strategy will be to use this fight to work out the best way to handle the right side — the approach of an ultra-top-class player. However . . .'

Imperceptibly the Gosei's complexion had changed colour.

'This is beyond the understanding of someone of my level. Perhaps even Kato . . . At this stage it's still too early to spend a lot of time thinking. Yet you, Nakayama, spent an hour on this move, and even now, days later, you're still worried about it. If you have so much free time, you

should just play lots of fast games, like Abe.'

He was speaking furiously, spittle flying, face flushed. I was so overcome by his forcefulness that I couldn't say a word. I recalled that whenever he ran into Abe 8-dan in the pressroom at the Nihon Ki-in, he would immediately challenge him to a 30-minute game. 'Ah, Abe Sensei,' he would say with mock humility, 'if you have the time, would you be so kind as to play me a game?' It's a rare sight to see top professionals light-heartedly play fast games. Obviously Abe's lack of pretension and his religious devotion to go appeal to Cho.

'Etcetera — I've been speaking violently, but I've really been yelling at myself. I also often get sidetracked in positions like this. But after all this is hardly going to decide the whole game. Take the game we just looked at (a game with Kato we had reviewed earlier that day) — there were a number of moves played by Kato that I felt grateful for. But what does that amount to? Kato was challenging me, he was saying, let's try it and see what happens. It's hard for me to put it into words, but at any rate I could tell that he was defying me ...'

Cho's expression had returned to normal and he was grinning shyly. Long ago, among the teachings of Honinbo Jowa Meijin (1787-1847), there was the admonition: 'Spending a long time searching for moves you can't see is the wrong path; meekly setting your mind on the tesuji is the correct path.' It rather seems that I had been dreaming of high-level tactics above my station when I still only half understood the basic tesujis of go.

Exact agreement

Some three days after that I visited Kobayashi Koichi. First of all, he gave me a commentary on a game of his with Chino 8-dan, then on one with Kojima 9-dan. Next he asked me to show him the Sakata-Hane and Kato-Cho games from the Meijin league. Since I was then one of the Asahi newspaper's go writers, I got to hear the players' commentaries on their games a step ahead of other people.

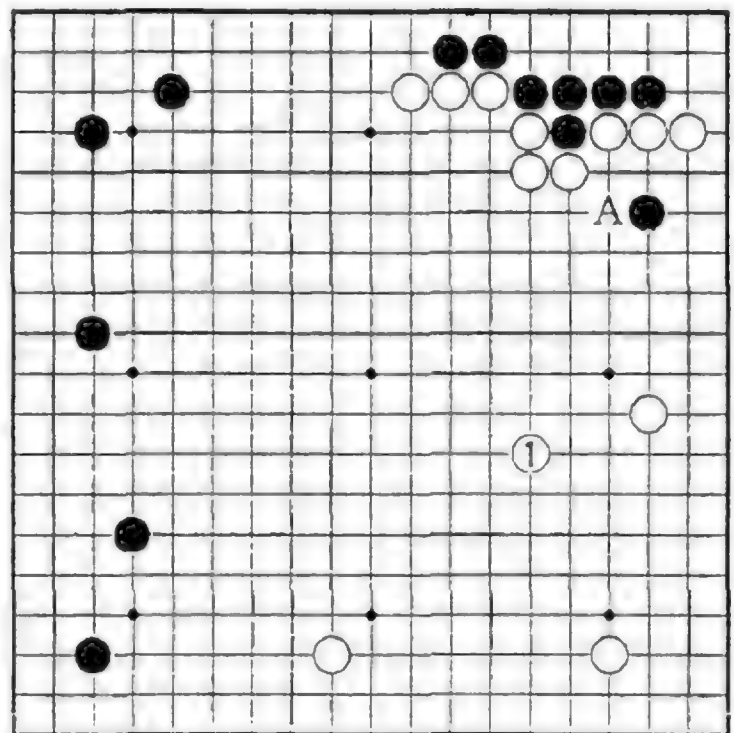
When this was over, he asked me to replay my game with Kanda 4-dan. This was the game on which Cho had made the enlightening comments. Embarrassed, I tried to refuse. 'No, a clumsy game like that would just soil your eyes. Let's forget

it.'

Kobayashi did not relent. 'No, no. I looked in on it, and it seemed interesting. Come on, show it to me.'

I suddenly had an idea. That connection that Cho had picked at a glance — would Kobayashi's reaction be the same? If I was going to be embarrassed, I might as well enjoy it. I felt an imprudent temptation to make a test.

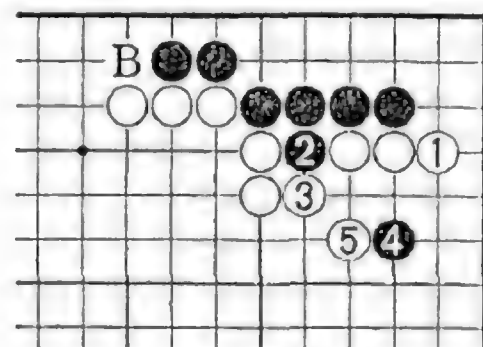
This duffer replayed the game up to White 1 in Dia. 2, then said: 'I couldn't make up my mind about this White 1. What should White do here?'



Dia. 2

Kobayashi replied instantly. 'A is the only move. With the komi, this is an easy win for White. Even without komi, it's promising.'

I was staggered. It was if Cho and Kobayashi had conspired with each other. Seeing me shake my head doubtfully, Kobayashi became concerned that I couldn't grasp the merits of A.



Dia. 3

'In the sequence in Dia. 3, descending at 1 might be a little premature, but since blocking at B becomes sente, it's a reasonable move. But exchanging 2 for 3 is bad for Black. Continuing with the 4-5 exchange is even worse. Already this

should put White way ahead.'

He was giving me a tewari* analysis. 'Way ahead' may be a figure of speech, but in face of such a clear and lucid explanation I had no reply. I am sure my readers will also have grasped his point. The difference between great players like Cho and Kobayashi and myself is that they see clearly what is only a blur to me.

Even so, I could feel nothing but gratitude for the way the 23-year-old Cho scolded me earnestly like a father and the 27-year-old Kobayashi explained things in simple language like a mother.

I have finally worked out the perfect way to

improve one's go. It's very simple: have Cho Chikun as your father, Kobayashi Koichi as your mother, and Abe Yoshiteru as your older brother. However, there's one important condition: the 47-year-old author is already too far gone.

In the old days, the Chinese poet lamented:

*Ah, how old I have become!
Whose mistake is this?*

(Translated by John Power)

*Tewari: changing the order of moves, removing superfluous stones if necessary, in a sequence in order to evaluate the basic structure.

Lament for an Overgrown Fingernail

How many hours a day does a professional study? This is a question I am often asked. The answer in my case is zero. I have a splendid go board, but I can't boast about it — it is yawning idly, gathering dust.

However, on request by the Ki-in authorities, I sometimes find myself dashing off a go book in a matter of days. Everyone has some redeeming talent, and when fired up I can complete in three days a job that would take someone else a month. Apparently this poor fool is known as 'Lightning Nakayama'. Well, in writing speed alone I'm a match for a super express, and if you stretched a point you could call this study.

However, in the production of a book, I do interview people like Kajiwara and Kobayashi Koichi to get material. This is no more than the simple duty of a go writer, but, sad to say, one finds that in many cases the writers of the books put out nowadays neglect to make even this minimal effort. They may indeed have interviewed a top professional, but what's the difference if there's no evidence of this in the finished product?

This is a story from when I was doing research with Kobayashi Koichi, then 8-dan, for a series of books. One day I saw him stare intently at the index finger of his right hand while muttering to himself: 'This fingernail really grows a lot lately. In the old days, it was the one fingernail I never had to cut. That shows how my study has fallen off.'

Looking more closely, I saw that this fingernail shone brightly, as if it had been manicured. It was quite different from the other fingernails.

I found this frightening. Just how many hours a day would you have to spend playing go stones to wear away your fingernail?

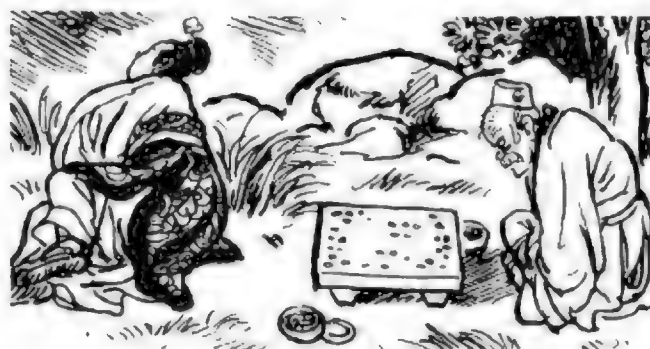
Five hours? Or would it be ten hours?

'Ten hours straight is quite impossible. At the outside, two hours. If you're concentrating to the utmost, two hours will exhaust you. You'd have to take a break, then start again.'

To read out a sequence in the space of a second, then to lay out the stones on the board at great speed. Two hours like this can't be lumped with two hours of Nakayama's time. With a player like myself with no pretensions to style, who learnt the game as an adult, those two hours would be equivalent to 20 hours.

In ancient times, the warrior Liu Zuande of Shu found that with his fighting days behind him his opportunities to ride horses grew fewer, and he lamented the fact that his thighs had become plump. This is known as the 'Lament for the fat thighs'. Similarly, Kobayashi was able to tell how much the time he devoted to studying go had decreased by the condition of his fingernail. This has been the account of his 'lament for an overgrown fingernail'.

(Translated by John Power)



Encounter with a Go Devil

Some years after I had learnt to play go, I encountered an extraordinarily strong player in a Shinjuku go club. He had an imperious nose, flashing eyes, and thick, arched eyebrows. His long, somewhat slender face showed unmistakably that he was the descendant of samurai. A topknot on his head would suit him perfectly, I thought.

This personage was looking intently at a game I was playing, and when it was finished, he said to himself, "Shall I play him a game?" and he changed places with my opponent.

He sat down heavily on the tatami mat, placed the bowl with the white stones between his knees, looked doubtfully at me and muttered: "Shall we have you try three stones?"

I was stupefied. I played on even with Takeda Toshiro, the strongest player at this go club, and I just took black against the club instructor, Ishii Kiyoshi. With three stones, I was confident I could hold my own even against Go Seigen, who at this time was at his peak.

There was a chance, I thought, that this man was some preposterously strong master, so I placed three stones, following the proper etiquette, and silently bowed. The samurai smiled for a moment, as if he had some secret source of amusement, then immediately played 1 on the 3-4 point.

This game took place nearly 30 years ago, but I still remember the fuseki. It is shown in the diagram.

The moves up to 22 are the perfectly ordinary two-space pincer joseki. While I was wondering

how White could expect to win playing straightforward moves like this, the samurai played in a strange place with 25.

I now realize that 25 is a magnificent move. Whether Black plays next at 'a' or 'b', White gets the nasty peep at 'c'. Black could swallow his pride and make the 'dog's face' move of 'd', despite its inefficiency, but then White 'e' would be annoying. I had no idea how to answer.

"What's up? You're taking your time," laughed the samurai. I don't remember how I played after this, but I do remember that White forced me to resign.

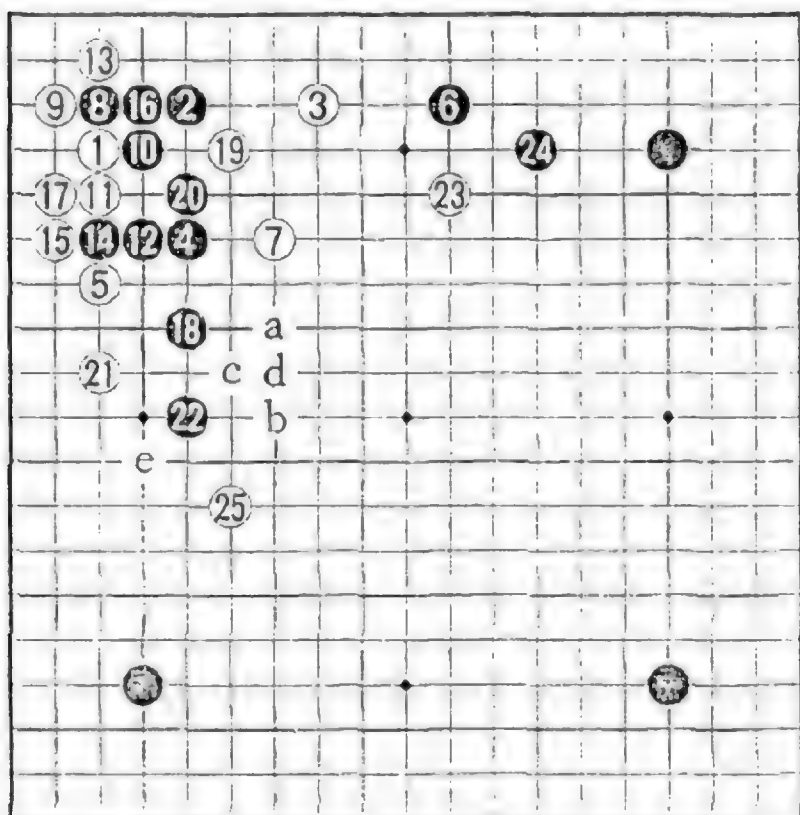
After the game, I asked the samurai how I should have played with 26, but instead of answering directly he just made the comment: "I don't like the moves to Black 22. You've played ten moves and all you've done is create a target for attack." He then abruptly departed, as if he'd just remembered an appointment. He struck me as well-intentioned but absent-minded.

This samurai was Takehara Kintaro, known and feared throughout the amateur go world as 'Devil Takehara'. He enjoyed his heyday in the period before the Kikuchi-Murakami group came to prominence. Thereafter I played many games with him on three stones, two stones, and black.

Some people dismissed him as a braggart, but this was because of his unconventional personality. Years later, at a function organized by a magazine, he scored an easy win on black against Watanabe Shokichi 9-dan, which shows that he was no mere braggart. At any rate, he didn't drink, he didn't smoke, he didn't gamble; when not following his profession of manufacturing go boards, he was always to be found playing go. He was a serious person, the epitome of the go fanatic. In the professional go world, his only equal is Abe Yoshiteru.

In passing I might mention that in amateur circles there was a player known as 'Braggart Wata'. He is a very strong player, but no match for Devil Takehara. On the other hand, he is unmatched for sharpness of tongue. Recently I happened to pass him in the corridor at the Central Tokyo branch of the Nihon Ki-in, and he let me have a barrellful, or, more like it, a cannonade.

"Hey, Nakayama. You're making yourself



useful to society these days. Everyone has to have some redeeming feature, but I didn't expect you to turn out to be a writer. Well, do the best you can.'

I was left gaping open-mouthed. He had disappeared around the corner before I had time

to say a word by way of counterattack. Braggart Wata was in good form. In my judgement, his machine-gun tongue puts him in a class even above Shirae and Koyama, the sharpest tongues in professional go.

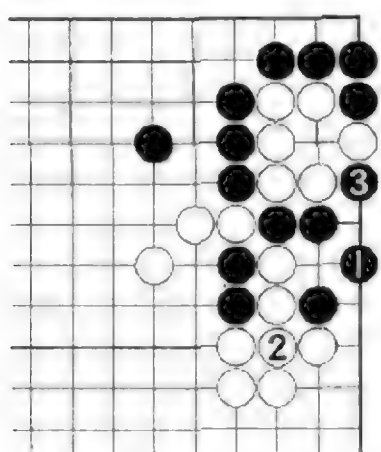
(Translated by John Power)

Ko Problems: Answers

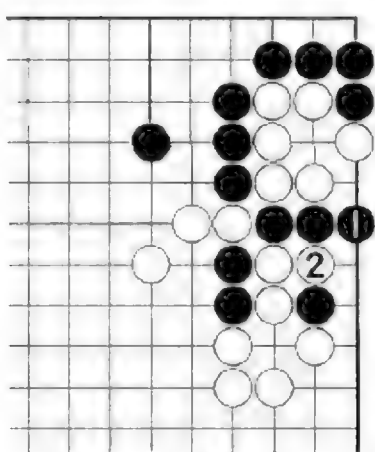
Answer to Problem 1

Dia. 1. Dipping down to the edge of the board with 1 is the tesuji. If White 2, Black gets his ko with 3.

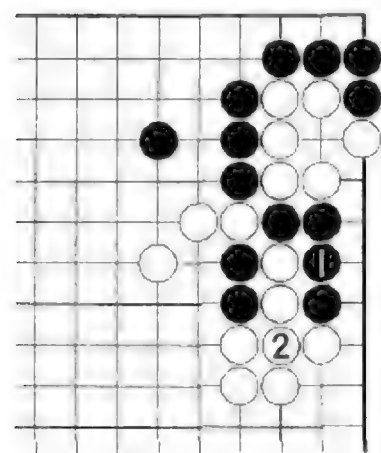
Dia. 2. Black 1 is a mistake: he can't atari after 2.



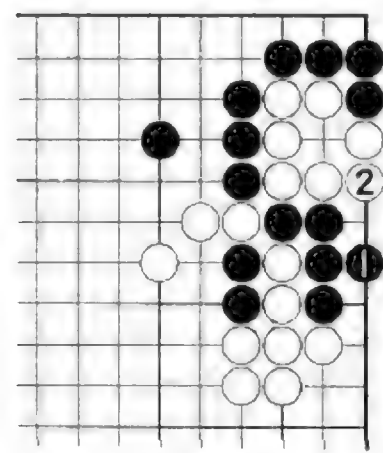
Dia. 1: correct



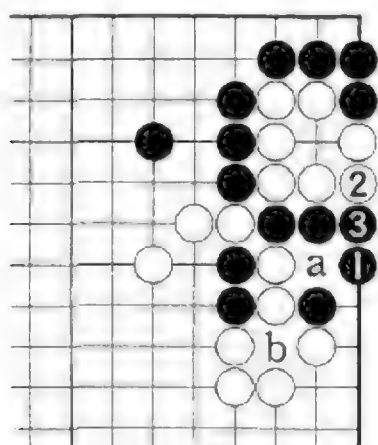
Dia. 2: wrong



Dia. 3: wrong



Dia. 4



Dia. 5

Dia. 3. The atari of 1 is another mistake; because of shortage of liberties, Black has no continuation that works. Next —

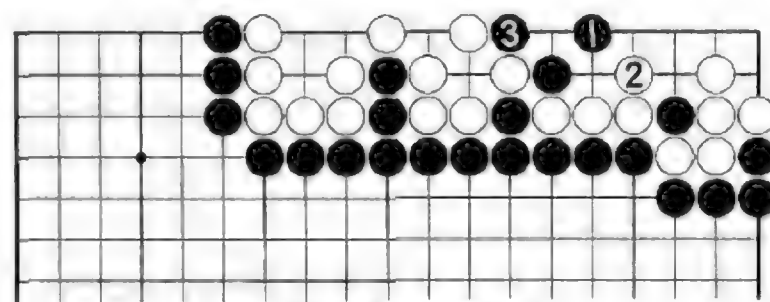
Dia. 4. Black plays 1, aiming at a throw-in at 2, but White 2 gets White out of trouble.

Dia. 5. If White answers 1 at 2, Black of

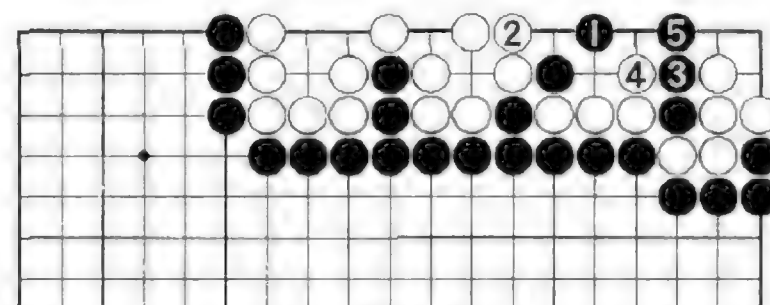
course just ataris at 3. This is obvious — the point is to show what damage the exchange of Black 'a' (1 in Dia. 3) for White 'b' does.

Answer to Problem 2

Dia. 1. Black 1 is the move. White can't atari, so he has to answer at 2, but this lets Black get his ko with 3.



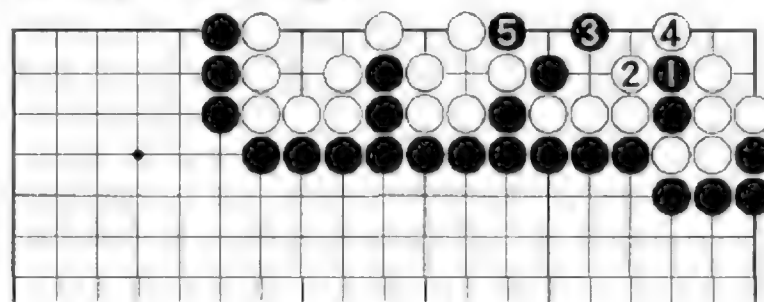
Dia. 1: correct



Dia. 2

Dia. 2. If instead White answers at 2, Black springs a trap on him with 3. After 5, White can't atari to the left of 5, so he loses all his corner stones. Note that the timing of 1 is important.

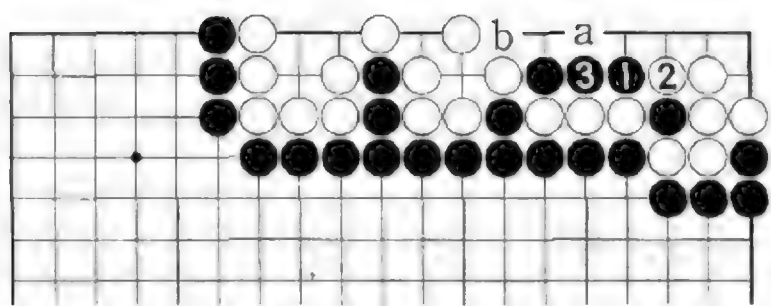
Dia. 3. If Black plays 1 first, he can get a ko with 3 and 5, but the difference from Dia. 1 is that he has given White two points by unnecessarily sacrificing 1.



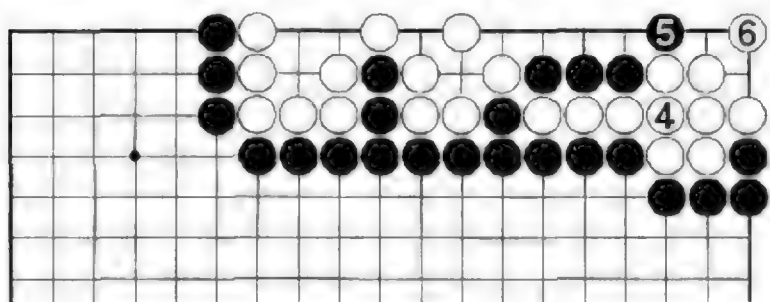
Dia. 3: wrong

Dia. 4. Black 1 is a mistake. Black 3 at 'a' is refuted by White 'b', but if 3 here —

Dia. 5. White has the clever move of 6. Black cannot atari, so he loses the fight.



Dia. 4: wrong

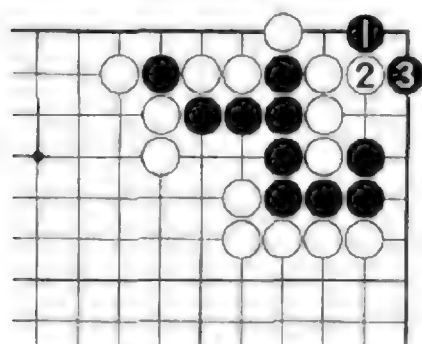


Dia. 5

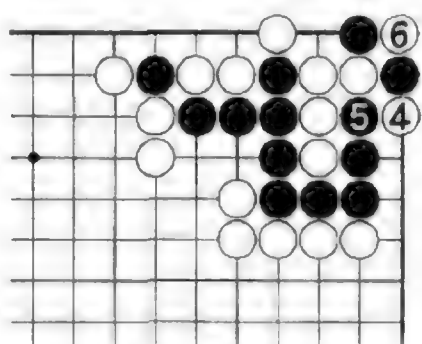
Answer to Problem 3

Dia. 1. Black 1 is the vital point. If White tries to intercept with 2, Black 3 is a tenacious answer. Next —

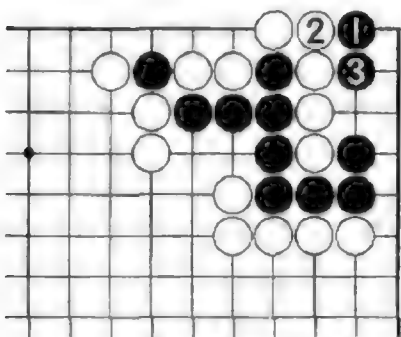
Dia. 2. If White 4, Black gets a ko with 5. If Black wins, he takes the whole corner, so —



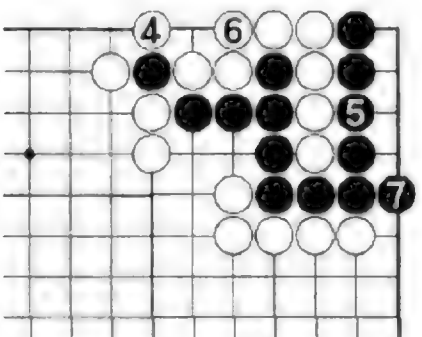
Dia. 1: correct



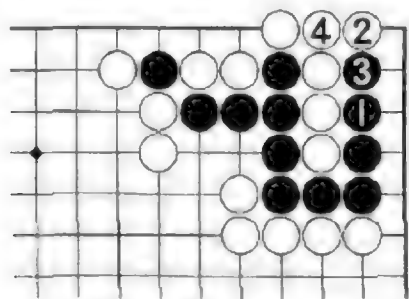
Dia. 2: ko



Dia. 3



Dia. 4: alive



Dia. 5: wrong

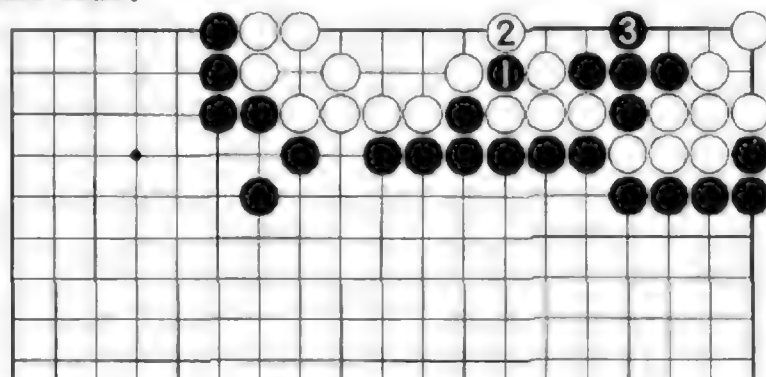
Dia. 3. If White is afraid of a ko, he will connect at 2. After Black 3 —

Dia. 4. White must defend at 4, so Black lives with 5 and 7.

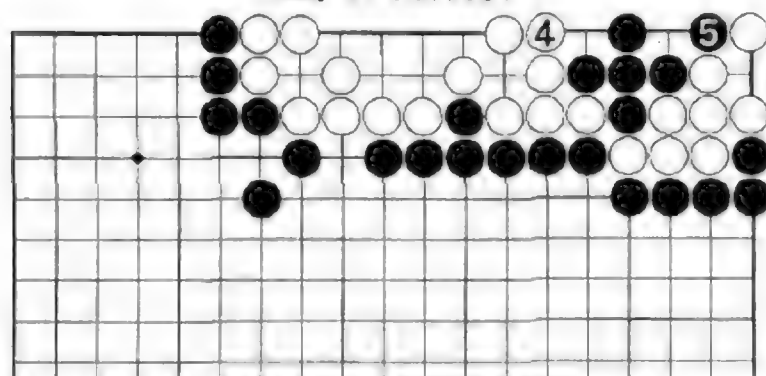
Dia. 5. If Black simply fills in a liberty with 1, White has the clever answer of 2 (not 3, as Black expected). If Black plays 1 at 3, White still answers at 2.

Answer to Problem 4

Dia. 1. First Black makes the throw-in at 1 and waits to see how White answers. If White 2 here, he descends at 3, making miai of a ko on either side.



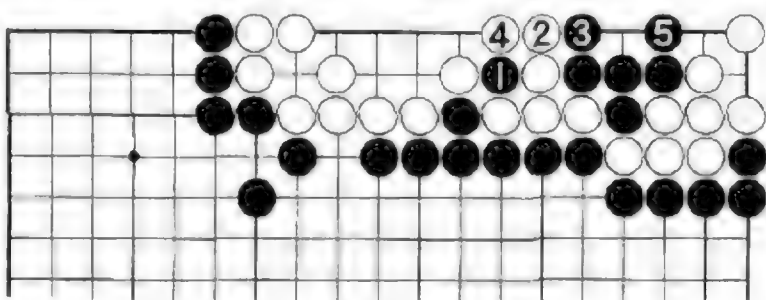
Dia. 1: correct



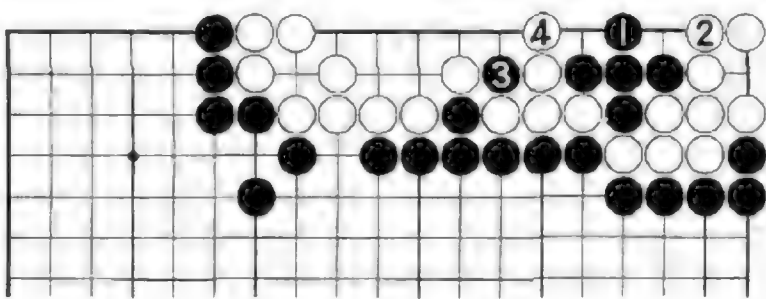
Dia. 2: ko

Dia. 2. If White 4, Black starts the ko with 5.

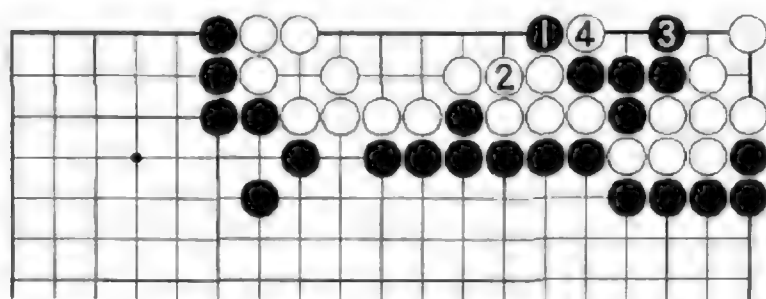
Dia. 3. If White answers 1 by descending at 2, Black gets a seki with 3 and 5. White therefore has the right to choose between a seki and a ko.



Dia. 3: seki



Dia. 4: wrong



Dia. 5: wrong

Dia. 4. Black 1 does not lead to the same result. When Black throws in at 3, White 4 is a good answer: Black is now helpless.

Dia. 5. Black 1 also leads nowhere.

The Classic of Go

by Donald L. Potter

Some months ago I was rapidly losing a game of go at the Far East Go Club, located in the Hsi Men Hotel in Taipei, when Chu Ming-yüan, author of *Anecdotes from Go History*, sauntered over and remarked, 'You know nothing of the basic principles of go.' Mortified, I looked up and replied, 'Sir, you have not counted it far to come the distance to my table. Surely you must have some words to profit me.'

'Profit, profit! Why talk of profit? Read the *Classic of Go* and you will gain understanding.' Whereupon he returned to his own musings.

The book to which Mr. Chu was referring was

the *Ch'i ching Shih-san p'ien* (The Classic of Go in Thirteen Chapters), written by a high official, Chang Ni, who served the Northern Sung emperor Jen Tsung (1023–63). The work was published sometime between 1049 and 1054 and was included in a larger volume, *Hsüan hsüan ch'i ching*, first published in 1349. [The title translates more or less as *Sutra of Go Mysteries*; it is known in Japan as *Gengen Gokyo* and is available in two editions, one annotated by Hashimoto Uтаро, the other by Go Seigen.] I've translated the first three chapters for this special issue of *Go World*.

The Classic of Go in Thirteen Chapters by the Huang-yu (1049–54) Grand Secretary Chang Ni

Chapter One Discussing the Board

Generally speaking, when counting all things,¹ one begins with the number one.² There are, on the go board, three hundred and sixty intersections plus one. The number one is supreme and gives rise to the other numbers because it occupies the ultimate position and governs the four quarters. Three hundred and sixty represents the number of days in the (lunar) year. The division (of the go board) into four quarters symbolizes the four seasons. The seventy-two points on the circumference represent the weeks (of the calendar).³ (The balance of) *yin* and *yang* is the model for the equal division of the three hundred and sixty stones into black and white.

The lines on the board are called (in Chinese) 'p'ing.' The spaces between the lines are called 'kua.' The board is square and still. The pieces are circular and move.⁴ From early times to the present, players have never had a game which was the same (as any other). Every day (each game) is quite different. So profound attention and careful thought are required. If we then look for the causes of victory or defeat, we will reach new heights (of understanding).

Chapter Two Calculating the Odds

The go player establishes his position (on the board) through correctness and keeps his opponent at a disadvantage through the power (of his strategic position). Therefore he must count (the odds) with certainty internally and so perfect the external (strength of his strategic) position.

One who has worked out that he will win before battle has even been joined has done much calculation; but one who has worked out that he will lose has calculated insufficiently. One who (still) does not know whether he will win or lose after battle has already been joined has not calculated at all.

The Art of War says: 'He who calculates much wins, he who calculates little loses. What then of one who does not calculate at all!' If we consider (the game) from this (point of view, the cause of) victory or defeat becomes apparent.

Chapter Three The Beginning

'The beginning' means the initial deployment of the pieces in the game (fuseki). Here one must observe the basic rules (of development).

First, the four corners should be (evenly) divided and stones of influence established. Then extend from the occupied star point either a small or large knight's move. From two contiguous stones (one can) jump three spaces. From three (one can) jump four spaces. As the (star-point) stones face each other, you may extend to five. It is not good to be either too close or too far. Neither is it necessary to be compassionate towards (one's

opponent).

All this has been explained by the ancients, as a model for later students. It is doubtful (if one would find much success) in abandoning or trying to change these (principles).

The Book of Poetry says: 'All are good at first, but few prove themselves to be so at the last.'⁵

Notes

1. I should express my gratitude to Chu Ming-yüan for suggesting this work and to Dr. Tony Prince of the University of Sydney for reading my translation and offering numerous suggestions. Note that Wade-Giles romanization has been used in this essay.
2. This first chapter is somewhat fanciful. But if the reader will bear along, later chapters are penetrating and perspicuous.

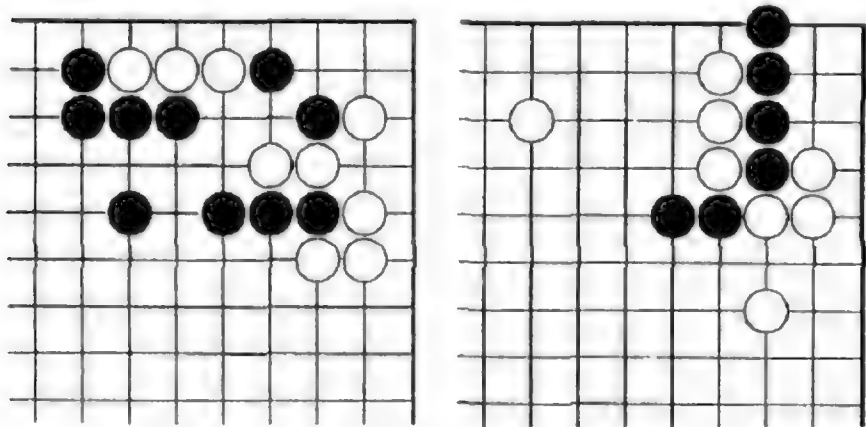
3. The Chinese lunar calendar is divided into 72 five-day weeks, each with its own name.
4. The statement follows the analogy of yin-yang, i.e. the board (yang) is compared to the earth, which is square and does not move, in contrast to the sky (yin), which is round and goes whirling about.
5. James Legge (trans.), *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. V, *The She King*, p. 505.

Capturing Race Problems

The following problems are all concerned with semeais or capturing races. In each case, Black seems to be in trouble, but he has a clever move that puts him ahead in the race to capture. The

problem is to find the elusive vital point that turns the tables on White. The gradings given for the problems are approximate.

Black to play in each problem.

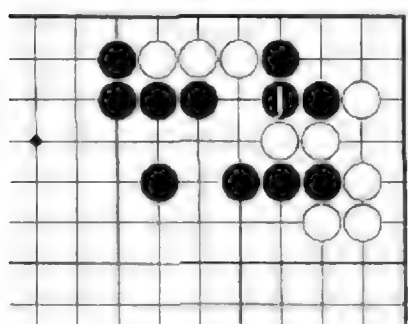


Capturing Race Problems: Answers

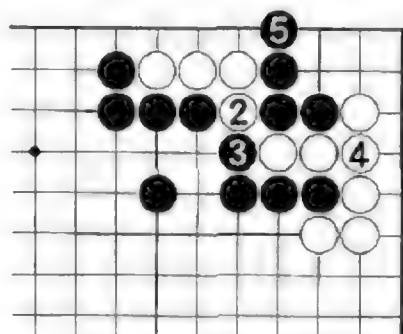
Answer to Problem 1

Dia. 1. It may look bad because it makes bad shape (an empty triangle), but Black 1 is the only move.

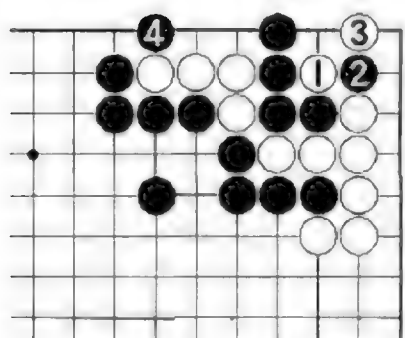
Dia. 2. If White 2, Black cuts with 3, then descends at 5. This puts him one move ahead in the capturing race.



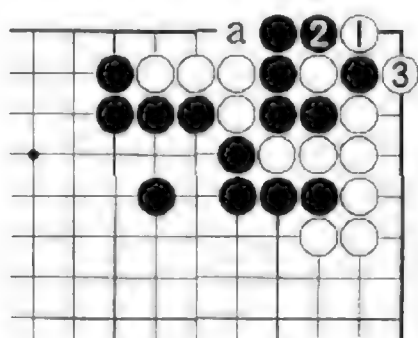
Dia. 1: correct



Dia. 2: Black wins



Dia. 3: Black wins

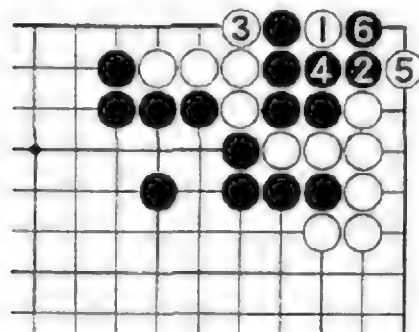


Dia. 4: ko

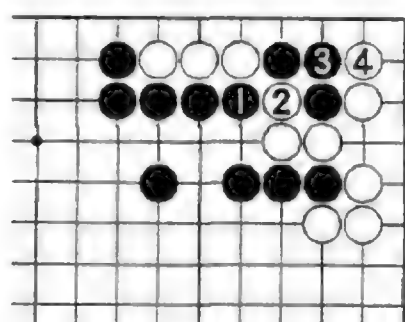
Dia. 3. If White 1, Black throws in a cut at 2 to slow him down, then proceeds to capture with 4.

Dia. 4. Note that capturing at 2 would be a mistake: this gives White a ko. Extending at 3 with 2 would be worse: White gets a snapback with 'a'.

Dia. 5. White 1 is the usual tesuji in this kind of position, but in the corner it does not work. Black captures a stone and keeps a move ahead in the race.



Dia. 5: Black wins



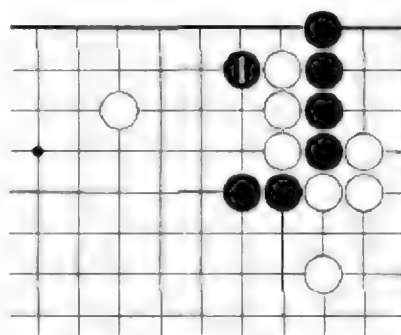
Dia. 6: wrong

Dia. 6. The instinctive move is Black 1, but this just helps White to take away one's own liberties. Don't trust your instincts in a semeai.

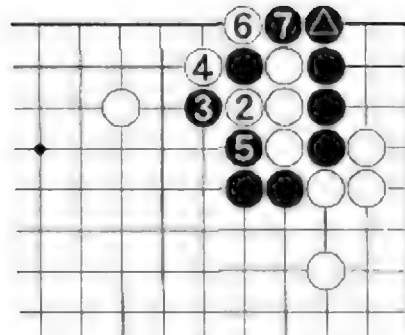
Answer to Problem 2

Dia. 1. The clamp of 1 is the tesuji.

Dia. 2. White can of course capture this



Dia. 1: the tesuji

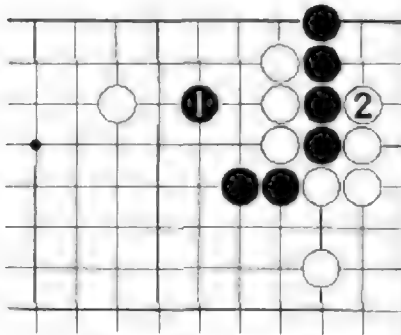


Dia. 2: Black wins

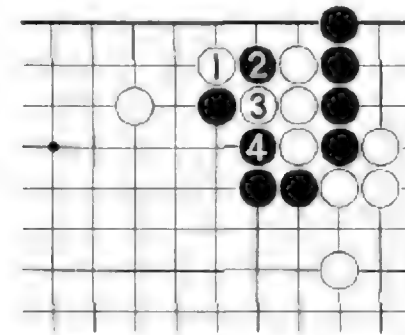
stone, but at the cost of reducing his own liberties. Note how useful the marked black stone is.

Dia. 3. Black 1 would also serve to cut off the three white stones, but in this case White just plays 2 and wins the corner semeai. Instead of 2 –

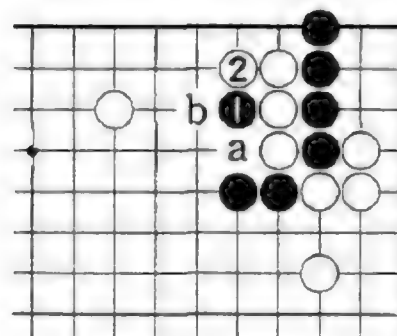
Dia. 4. If White were foolish enough to counter with 1, we revert to the correct-answer sequence.



Dia. 3: too slow



Dia. 4: 1 is wrong



Dia. 5: wrong

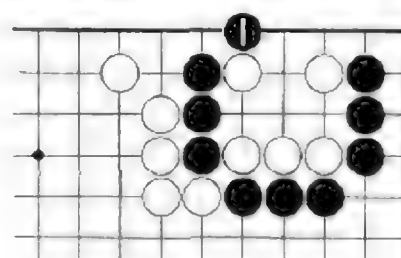
Dia. 5. Black 1 does nothing; it fails to make use of Black's descent to the edge.

Answer to Problem 3

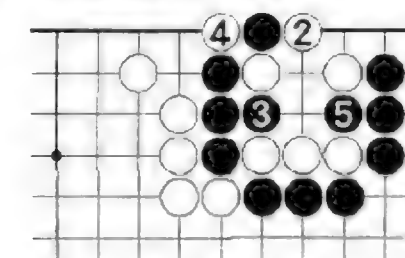
Dia. 1. The vital point is Black 1. White has no answer.

Dia. 2. White 2 is best, as it saves some stones, but Black captures the pivotal stones with 3 and 5.

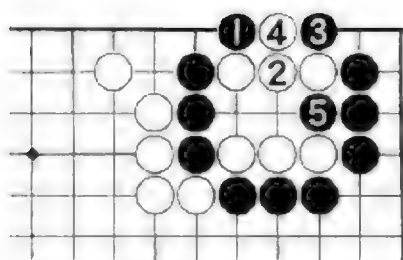
Dia. 3. White 2 is a trickier answer. Black



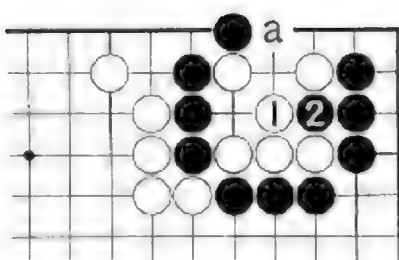
Dia. 1: correct



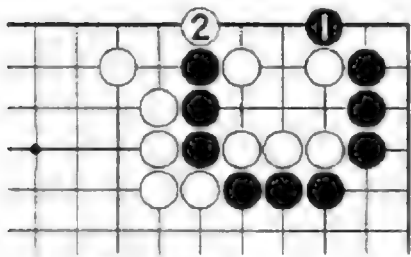
Dia. 2: Black wins



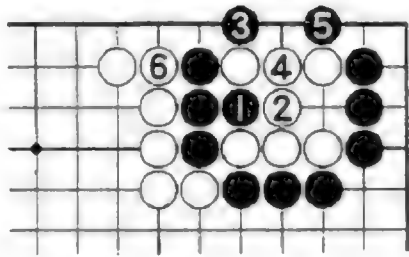
Dia. 3: Black wins



Dia. 4: Black wins



Dia. 5: wrong



Dia. 6: wrong

has to come up with another tesuji, the hane at 3, to refute it. The successive hanes ensure that Black captures the pivotal stones by keeping White short of liberties.

Dia. 4. White 1 aims at playing a ko at 'a' if Black links up on the edge, but his aim is thwarted when Black counters at 2.

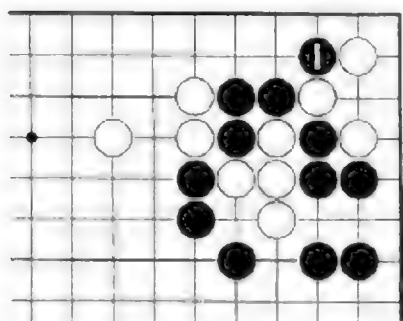
Dia. 5. Black 1 is too slow. This is what White was waiting for: he wins with 2.

Dia. 6. Filling in one's own liberty with 1 is suicidal. This puts Black behind in the race.

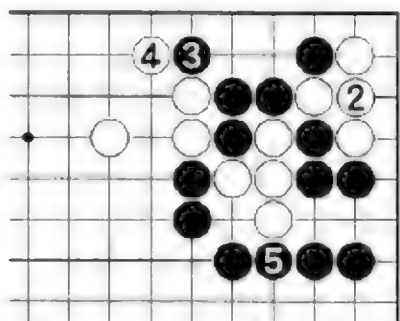
Answer to Problem 4

Dia. 1. Beginning with the atari of 1 is the key.

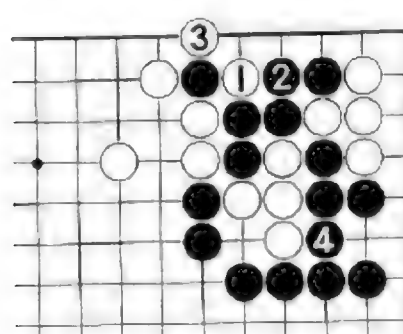
Dia. 2. Black follows up with another hane. He can now attack at 5, as the two hanes have given him an extra liberty.



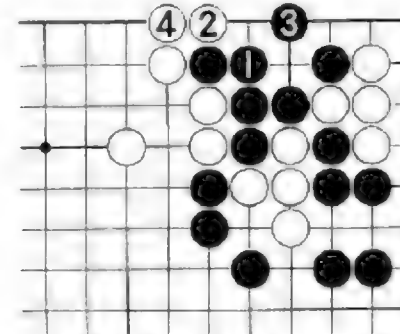
Dia. 1: correct



Dia. 2: an extra liberty



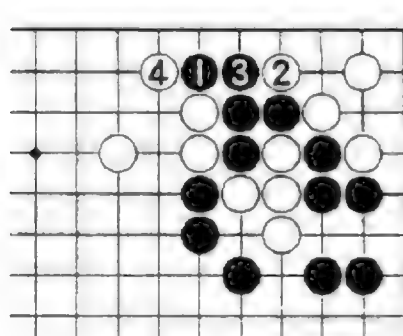
Dia. 3: Black wins



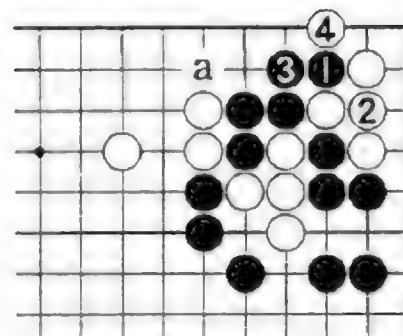
Dia. 4: Black loses

Dia. 3. If White captures a stone, he will be able to link up on the edge, but Black captures four stones in sente, so he is satisfied.

Dia. 4. Black must not connect at 1, as that puts him behind in the capturing race.



Dia. 5: Black loses



Dia. 6: Black loses

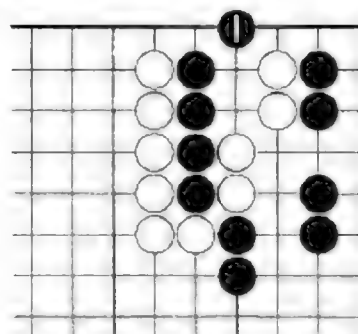
Dia. 5. If Black starts with the hane at 1, White forces with 2 and wins the semeai.

Dia. 6. Connecting at 3 fails to extend Black's liberties, as White has the clever answer of 4. Of course, White 4 at 'a' would let Black win the fight.

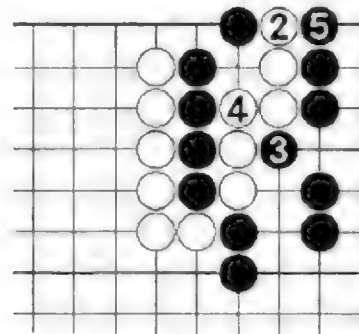
Answer to Problem 5

Dia. 1. The vital point for attack and defence is 1: this one move increases Black's liberties and reduces White's.

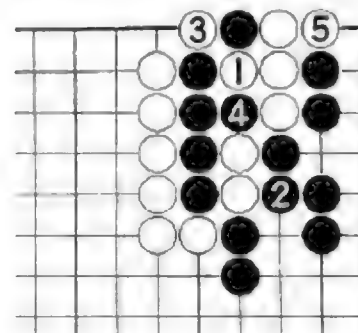
Dia. 2. Black wins the fight by one move. Instead of 4 —



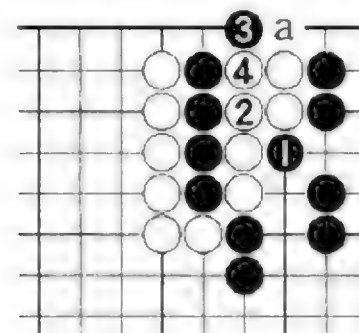
Dia. 1: the vital point



Dia. 2: Black wins



Dia. 3: gote for White

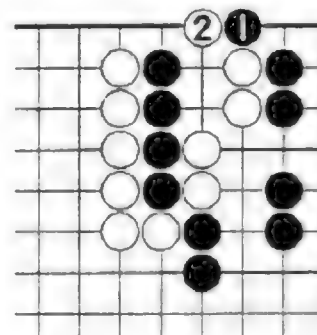


Dia. 4: wrong order

Dia. 3. If White plays 1, he can save part of his group in gote, but Black captures the pivotal stones.

Dia. 4. Changing the order of moves with 1 and 3 is a bad mistake. This way White is not forced to play at 'a', so he just ataris at 4.

Dia. 5. If Black 1, White gets to take the vital point of 2, so he wins the capturing race.

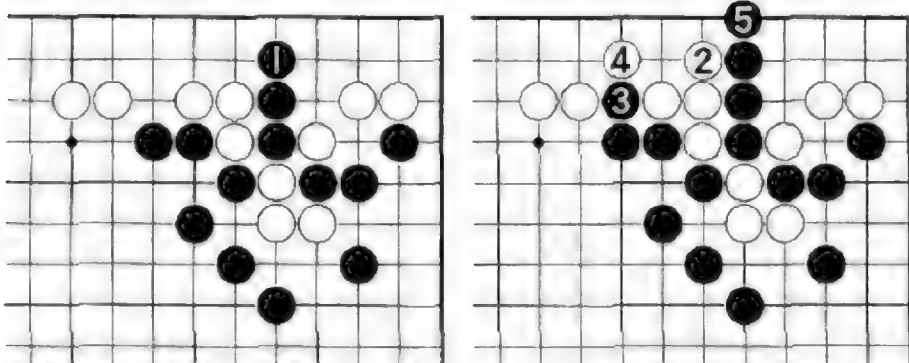


Dia. 5: White wins

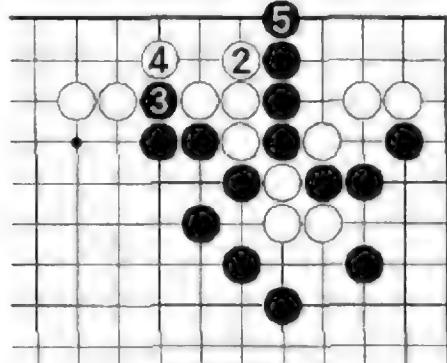
Answer to Problem 6

Dia. 1. Descending at 1 is the key move. However, this is not yet the solution — Black now has four liberties, but so does White.

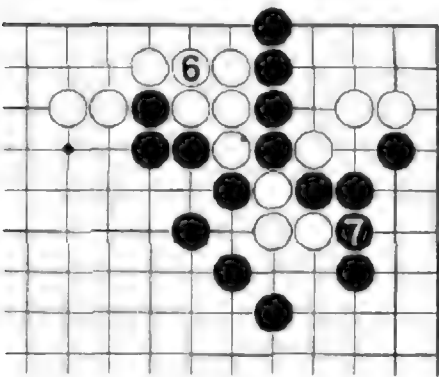
Dia. 2. If White 2, Black plays 3 in order to make 5 sente. Next —



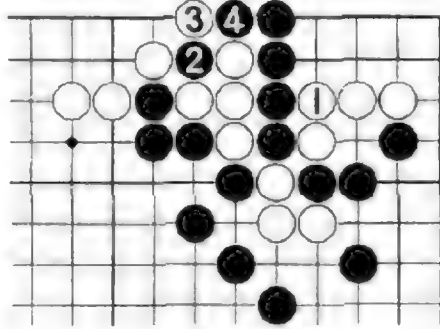
Dia. 1: correct



Dia. 2: the follow-up



Dia. 3: Black wins

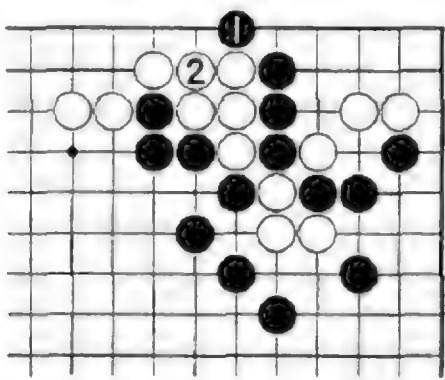


Dia. 4: disaster for White

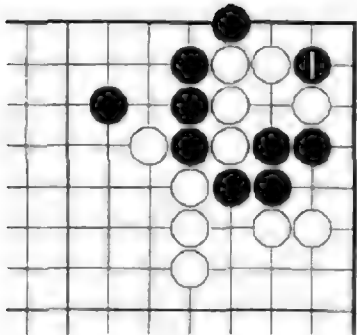
Dia. 3. White must play 6, but that lets Black win the fight with 7.

Dia. 4. If White 1, Black uses the sacrifice of 2 to capture White.

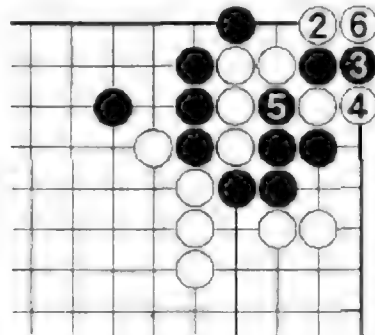
Dia. 5. Playing the atari of 1 instead of 5 in Dia. 2 would be a bad mistake. This does not increase Black's liberties, so he loses.



Dia. 5: suicide



Dia. 1



Dia. 2

Answer to Problem 7

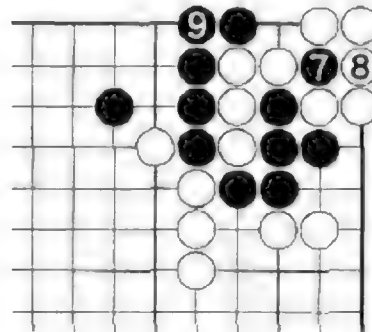
Dia. 1. Black seems to be way behind in this fight, so he has to do something dramatic. If

you found Black 1, then you can pride yourself on your resourcefulness.

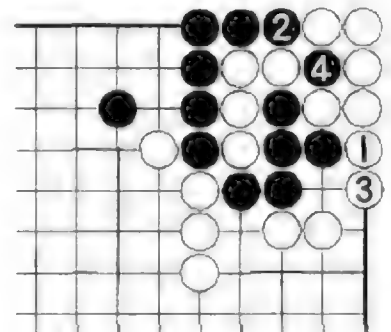
Dia. 2. White must atari at 2. Black plays the well-known two-stone sacrifice with 3 in order to set up a squeeze. Next —

Dia. 3. The throw-in at 7 is important. After 9 —

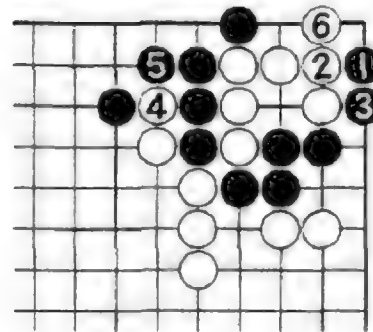
Dia. 4. White can save half his group, but he can't connect in answer to 2, so Black saves his group.



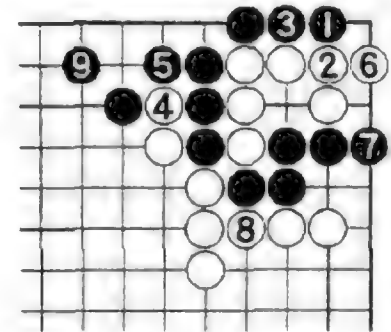
Dia. 3



Dia. 4: success



Dia. 5: seki



Dia. 6: seki

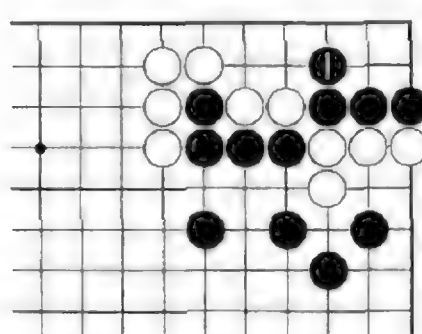
Dia. 5. The placement at 1 is too slow. White creates a defect in Black's shape with 4, then descends at 6, getting a seki.

Dia. 6. The placement at 1 likewise secures a seki, but this is not good enough.

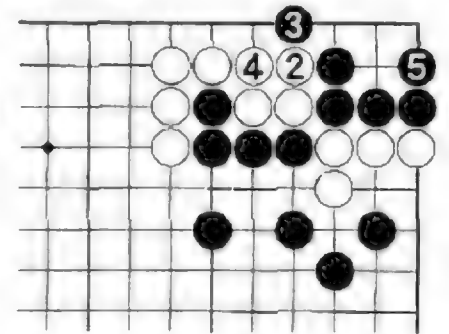
Answer to Problem 8

Dia. 1. Black 1 is obviously the first move. The problem is what happens after this.

Dia. 2. If White 2, Black 3. The next move, Black 5, is the tesuji. This is a difficult move to find; surprisingly, it increases Black's liberties. Next —



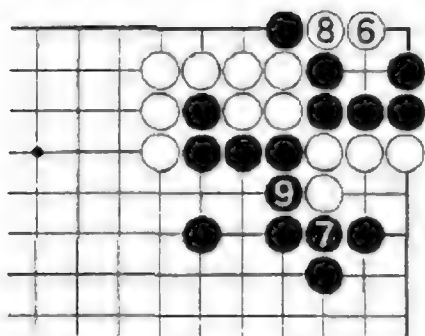
Dia. 1



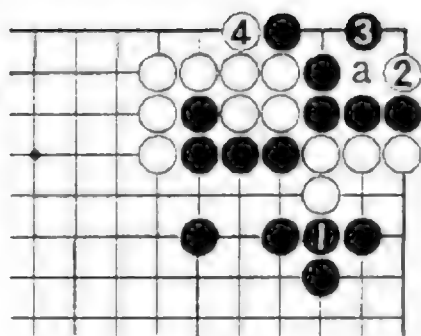
Dia. 2: the tesuji

Dia. 3. Black wins the capturing race by one move.

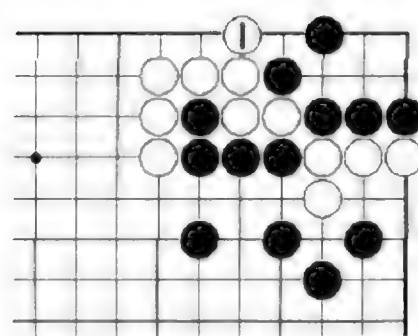
Dia. 4. Without a black stone at 2, White would play there and get a ko. If Black omits 3,



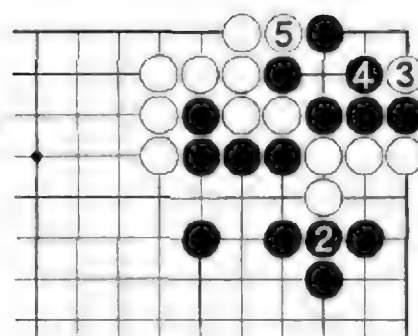
Dia. 3: Black wins



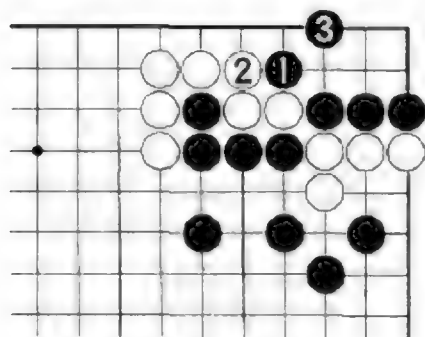
Dia. 4: ko



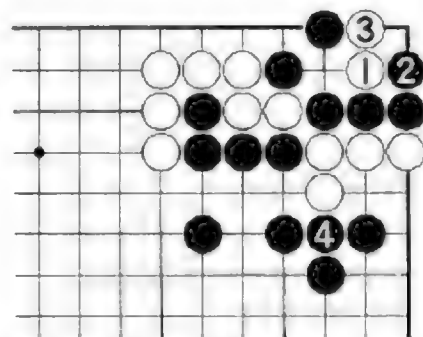
Dia. 7: correct



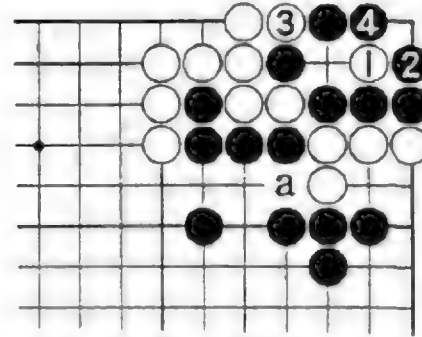
Dia. 8: ko



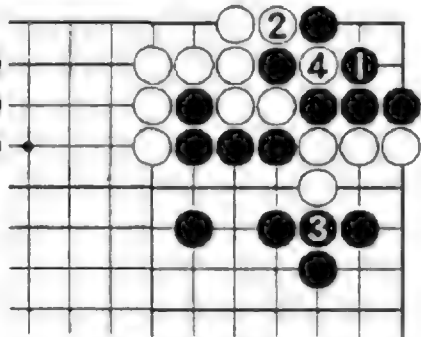
Dia. 5: wrong



Dia. 6: wrong for White



Dia. 9: Black wins



Dia. 10: ko

White wins outright with 'a'.

Dia. 5 As well as finding the correct answer, you have to establish why Black 1 is wrong.

Dia. 6. If White attacks Black's eye shape with 1, Black wins the fight, but —

Dia. 7. Simply descending at 1 is the strongest move for White. Next —

Dia. 8. If Black 2, White plays at 3, which is the vital point for reducing Black's liberties. The result is a ko.

Dia. 9. White 1 fails; Black wins the fight unconditionally after 4. (If White captures one stone, Black recaptures two stones.) If White 3 at 4, Black plays 'a'.

Dia. 10. If Black 1 instead of 2 in Dia. 8, White still gets a ko.

As these problems show, even semeais in which each side has only a couple of liberties can be quite complicated. Anything can happen — if you make it.
(*Igo Club*, June, 1987)

The Professional Rating Tournament

by John Power

The Nihon Ki-in rating tournament, known as the Oteai, is the most important tournament for professional players, yet it is the least well known. It has no sponsor, the prize money is insignificant, the game fees are only about half of those in the regular newspaper tournaments, and the results are given very little publicity in the go press in Japan. The reason why, nonetheless, it is so important is that it is the main factor determining the earning potential of professionals. The game fees paid in the newspaper tournaments are scaled according to rank, so the only sure way a player has of increasing his income is by gaining promotion. To give an example from the Meijin tournament, the game fee paid a 5-dan is over two and a half times as large as that paid a 1-dan, and the fee paid to a 9-dan is four times as large. Similar scales are also applied to the fees paid for teaching, game commentaries, and writing

articles and books. Moving one step up the promotion ladder can lead to an appreciable increase in one's annual income.

Even for professional players, of course, money is not everything — another important incentive for gaining promotion is professional pride. Even if he has never won a title, a 9-dan gets a lot of respect simply by being on the top of the dan ladder. Most players, of course, don't get that far, but still if you reach the middle ranks, say around 5-dan to 7-dan, you can consider yourself a respectable player. (Officially the ranks from 1- to 4-dan are called the low-dan ranks and those from 5-dan up the high-dan ranks.) The great thing about the Oteai system, for the participants, though it robs it of drama for go fans, is that there is no demotion; that means that a player's dan may not be an indication of his present strength but rather his strength when he was at his peak.

The Oteai Points System

Handicap	Dan difference	Colour taken		Win	Jigo	Loss
Even	same dan	black		75	45	15
		white		105	75	45
B-W-B	one dan different	lower dan	black	80	50	20
			white	110	80	50
		higher dan	black	70	40	10
			white	100	70	40
Black	two dan different	lower dan (B) } higher dan (W) }		90	60	30
Black of the B-2-B series	three dan different	lower dan (B)		100	70	40
		higher dan (W)		80	50	20

For various reasons, then, the Oteai is taken very seriously, especially by the younger players eager to make their mark in the go world and achieve financial independence. The system is structured so that progress through the early ranks can be very rapid, with the first four promotions coming at the rate of one a year or faster, so for young players the Oteai is a great stimulus to study. Not only is it one of the best barometers of their progress, it also helps go fans to identify the champions of the future.

The Oteai system

The first feature to note is that all games in the Oteai are played without komi. Nowadays it is the only tournament not to use komi; in all the others, Black gives White a komi of $5\frac{1}{2}$ points to compensate for the advantage of the first move. With no komi, the player with black, especially between opponents of the same strength, has a great advantage. This is where the unique points system of the Oteai comes into play.

Each game played in the Oteai is allocated a total of 120 points, to be shared between the winner and the loser. A player's share varies according to the difference in rank between him and his opponent and the colour he had. For example, between players of the same rank, the winner will get a bigger share of the points if he won with white than if he won with black. The share for beating a higher-ranked player with white is bigger still. The smallest winner's share is 70 points, which is for a higher-ranked player

winning with black; the biggest share is 110 points, which is for the lower-ranked player winning with white. In theory, between players of the same rank the colours are decided by nigiri (one player takes a handful of stones and the other guesses if the number is odd or even), but in practice the tournament staff of the Tournament Department of the Nihon Ki-in decide the colours on behalf of the players when drawing up the schedule for a session. If players really want to, they can come to the Nihon Ki-in on the day concerned and carry out the nigiri themselves, but nobody ever bothers to do this.

The chart above gives the points system. Note that players more than 3-dan different in strength are not matched. The reason is that the basis of this system is the assumption that one professional dan is equivalent to one third of a handicap stone, so with a four-dan difference the lower-ranked player would have to take a two-stone handicap. Before the war, handicap games between professionals were common, but nowadays they are avoided in official matches. In theory, a 9-dan would have to give a shodan three stones, but this is recognized as unreasonable. Honinbo Shusai, who as Meijin was the only 9-dan from 1914 to 1938, played quite a few handicap games with low-ranked professionals, but even he was able to win less than a fifth of them. Judging from some recent unofficial games, the margin between a top 9-dan and an average 1-dan seems more like two stones.

In practice, players more than 2-dan different

are not matched, so, for example, a 5-dan would normally play opponents from 3-dan to 7-dan. The only way a pairing with a 3-dan difference is realized is when the opponent in a game already scheduled is promoted during the current session. In that case, a 5-dan, for example, might find himself playing a newly promoted 8-dan. The handicap for a 3-dan difference calls for the lower-ranked player to take two stones in one game out of three, but the 5-dan takes black in their game and never gets to play the other games in the set of three, since he is not paired again with the 8-dan as long as he remains 5-dan.

The actual promotion is decided by a player's average score over a certain number of games, given in the second chart. There is a lot of flexibility in the system, most importantly in the fact that a player can specify where the series of games deciding promotion begins. Also over a longer series a lower points average will earn promotion. That means, to take an extreme case which hasn't yet come up, that a shodan player could lose every Oteai game for ten years, then gain promotion to 2-dan because he suddenly had a good year. Not a few players have stagnated for one or even two decades at a certain rank.

As the second chart shows, the main feature of this points system is that the higher you go, the more games you have to play to gain promotion. Moreover, you play fewer games. Players from 1-dan to 3-dan play 12 oteai games a year (half in the spring session and half in the autumn session), 4-dans play ten games, and 5-dans to 8-dans play only eight games. A new professional can reach 2-dan early in the autumn session and be well on his way to 3-dan by the end of his first year, yet it takes an 8-dan the best part of three years to earn the points for promotion to 9-dan.

Finally, like Japan's tax system, the onus is on the individual to declare his 'earnings'. If a player fails to go to the Tournament Section and claim his promotion before he plays his next game, he misses out. In other words, while he can start his qualifying sequence anywhere he pleases, he must complete it with the last game he played before making his application. This may seem severe, but there is a logical reason for it: if the player plays another game at his

Points for Promotion

Dan \ Average	75 points	70	67.5
1-dan	8 games	12	16
2-dan	10	14	18
3-dan	12	16	20
4-dan	14	18	22
5-dan	16	20	24
6-dan	18	22	26
7-dan	20	24	28
8-dan	22	26	30

The number of games given for each dan is the minimum required for the promotion sequence at the specified average.

old rank, then claims a promotion on the basis of the preceding game, the latest game will have been played at the wrong handicap, which would be unfair to his opponent.

How the system works

To see how this system works in practice, let's take a look at the Oteai record of Michael Redmond as he earned promotion from 2-dan to 3-dan. This is the only promotion to date that Michael hasn't sailed through, but for that very reason it gives a good idea of the intricacies of the promotion system.

Michael was promoted to 2-dan on 18 November 1981, the same year that he became shodan. Immediately after his promotion, his oteai games started counting toward his promotion to 3-dan. His record was:

1981 Autumn (latter half)

- 1 (25 Nov.). Beat Inoue 2-dan with B: 75 points
- 2 (9 Dec.). Jigo with Tei 2-dan with W: 75
- 3 (13 Jan. 1982). Beat Ono 3-dan with B: 80

1982 Spring

- 4 (5 May). Beat Takabayashi 3-dan with B: 80
- 5 (26 May). Beat Kaku 4-dan with B: 90

At this point Michael's average was 80, which put him well on track for 3-dan, but then he met with some reverses.

- 6 (16 June). Lost to Sasaki 2-dan with B: 15
- 7 (23 June). Lost to So 1-dan with W: 40
- 8 (7 July). Lost to Muramatsu 1-dan with W: 40

9 (21 July). Lost to Yoda 4-dan with B: 30

Michael thus finished the spring session with an average of 58.3, which was useless. Note that the costly loss in Game 6 didn't completely wipe out his chances. It only took his average down to 69, so he could have absorbed the setback if he had resumed winning.

1982 Autumn

10 (1 Sept.). Lost to Sato 1-dan with W: 40

11 (14 Sept.). Lost to Seki 3-dan with B: 20

12 (22 Sept.). Beat Ando 2-dan with B: 75

13 (29 Sept.). Beat Koyama 4-dan with B: 90

14 (6 Oct.). Beat Aizawa 1-dan with W: 100

15 (20 Oct.). Beat Sakamaki 3-dan with B: 80

Michael put an end to his dismal string of losses and ended the autumn session with an excellent average of 86.25. This is only over the last four games, of course: a player can elect to start the promotion sequence at any point he wishes, so Michael just started over again from Game 12.

1983 Spring

16 (27 April). Beat Kanai 4-dan with B: 90

17 (4 May). Lost to Aoki 1-dan with W: 40

(Note that the above loss only took his average down to 79.)

18 (6 June). Beat Kondo 4-dan with B: 90

19 (22 June). Lost to Maeda 1-dan with W: 40

20 (22 June). Lost to Oya 3-dan with B: 20

21 (29 June). Beat Amano 3-dan with B: 80

The last loss took his average down to 70.5 over the last 10 games, which fell quite a bit short of the 75 average required for promotion. However, he had a fallback position: it was right on the qualification line for a 14-game sequence.

1983 Autumn

22 (24 Aug.). Beat Narusawa 4-dan with B: 90

23 (14 Sept.). Beat Ninomiya 1-dan with W: 110

24 (21 Sept.). Beat Shiratori 4-dan with B: 90

Because of the excellent points earned in the last three games, Michael was able to go back and start his 14-game sequence with Game 11, since that gave him an average of 72.5. When he suffered that loss to Seki, the mere 20 points he gained must have seemed completely useless



Michael Redmond (photo taken soon after his promotion to 3-dan)

to him: it's ironic that it later turned out to be the first link in his promotion sequence.

Oteai game fees and prize money

The table below shows the game fees for the Oteai. By professional standards, they are not particularly high — for comparison, a 1-dan is paid ¥48,000 per game in the 1st round of the Meijin tournament — but the shodan is at least guaranteed this fee for 12 games per year, whereas he might be eliminated from the Meijin tournament after one game.

Game Fees

1-dan: ¥11,400	5-dan: ¥27,700
2-dan: ¥14,000	6-dan: ¥31,700
3-dan: ¥17,300	7-dan: ¥36,300
4-dan: ¥20,700	8-dan: ¥41,100
9-dan: ¥193,600 per year	

The most interesting item is the fee for 9-dans, who, of course, don't play in the Oteai, since they can't be promoted any higher. The sum of ¥193,600 is paid to them (in two instalments, one in summer, one in winter, thus resembling the two annual bonuses paid to salaried workers) to compensate them for the loss of income they would otherwise incur by reaching 9-dan. The above fees are paid by the Nihon Ki-in, since the Oteai does not have a sponsor these days; they are given no publicity, so the average go fan in Japan is not aware that there are any fees in the Oteai, let alone that 9-dans get a

'present' twice a year.

The Oteai is actually divided into two sections: 1- to 4-dan and 5-dan and up. Every year the players with the best results in each division are given prizes; the places are decided not by the win-loss record but by the points average, so the chances of a tie are fairly remote.

Oteai Prizes

Top Division (5- to 8-dan)

1st place: ¥560,000 (about \$4,000)

2nd: ¥280,000

3rd: ¥150,000

4th: ¥90,000

Bottom Division

1st: ¥280,000

2nd: ¥150,000

3rd: ¥90,000

4th: ¥55,000

5th: ¥35,000

The extra prize in the bottom division is given to encourage the younger players. Note that these divisions only apply to the above prizes; they do not affect the pairing of players.

We said above that the chances of a tie for one of these prizes is remote. The win-loss records may be identical, but the relative handicaps on which the games were played (hence the points scored) are most unlikely to coincide. A look at the results for 1986 will bear this out.

1986 Prize Winners

Top Division

1st: Kobayashi Satoru 8-dan: 8 wins 0 losses, average points: 92.50

2nd: Yasuda Yasutoshi 5-dan: 8-0, av. 86.87

3rd: Su Kaisei 5-dan: 7-0 (one game not played), av. 84.28

4th: Tei Meiko 6-dan: 7-0-1 jigo, av. 83.75

Bottom Division

1st: Konagai 4-dan: 10-0 (two games not played), av. 86.5

2nd: Takabayashi 3-dan: 9-1, av. 86

3rd: Okada 3-dan: 11-1, av. 85.41

4th: Enda 4-dan: 10-1-1 jigo, av. 81.66

5th: Nakano 3-dan: 9-3, av. 77.50

In addition, Kobayashi, Yasuda, Su and Konagai also received gold badges for winning all their games.

Just for the record, 34 players earned promotions last year, including two to 9-dan. One of them was Abe, who spent 12 years as an 8-dan, playing 99 games. The most interesting promotion was that of Takeda Misao to 4-dan. Takeda (aged 66) is the elder sister of Kajiwara Takeo 9-dan and the wife of Takeda 6-dan; she reached 3-dan in 1956, then retired in 1972. She made a comeback in 1977, but has only been playing two Oteai games in each session (players have the option of limiting the number of Oteai games; similarly, they can withdraw from newspaper tournaments but keep playing in the Oteai if they wish).

Incidentally, Michael Redmond, then 4-dan, took 1st place in the bottom division in 1984 with a 12-0 score for average points of 90. In 1987 his record was 7-1, average 81.25, which may put him in the running for a prize.

Promotion Records

Finally, let's look at some promotion records. In view of the larger number of games per year and the shorter sequences required, it's quite possible for players to advance to 5-dan at the rate of a dan a year, but after that it takes at least two years a dan.

Going by the chart on page 49, it should take a minimum of 120 games to reach 9-dan. The record for the fastest promotion to 9-dan at the Nihon Ki-in is held by Cho Chikun. He became shodan at the age of 11 and reached 9-dan at 24, which made him the youngest 9-dan in history.

Cho's cumulative record in the Oteai was 87 wins, 20 losses, 1 no-contest, for a total of 111 games. This is nine short of the supposed minimum — the answer to how he managed this can be found, for example, in his record going from 4-dan to 5-dan. He was promoted in October 1971 after 11 straight wins. According to the regulations, a 4-dan must play 14 games, but Cho claimed promotion immediately on the basis of the fact that even if his remaining three games were counted as losses, his average would still be well over the qualifying mark.

In theory, it should be possible to reach 9-dan after less than 100 games, but it will be quite a player who does it.

Oteai Records

A summary of the main promotion records follows:

Youngest 1-dan: Cho Chikun, aged 11 in 1968. Actually Cho disappointed his teacher, Kitani Minoru, who had expected him to make it the previous year and seriously considered sending him home to Korea when he didn't. Rin Kaiho is second at twelve. When he came to Japan in 1928, aged 14, Go Seigen was granted a 3-dan diploma by the Nihon Ki-in. (In the Edo period, Doteki is said to have become shodan at the age of nine or ten. He, Go Seigen, and Cho are the three great prodigies of go history, but unfortunately Doteki died at the age of 21 in 1690.)

Youngest 9-dan: Cho Chikun, age 24 (followed by Rin Kaiho and Kiyonari at 25 and Ishida and Takemiya at 26).

Oldest player to be promoted to 9-dan: the late Nakamura Yutaro, at 73.

Quickest promotion to 9-dan: Kiyonari Tetsuya (Kansai Ki-in), ten years three months. Second is Sonoda Yuichi, also Kansai Ki-in, at ten years five months. Formerly even the higher-ranked players at the Kansai Ki-in played 12 games per year, giving them an edge over Nihon Ki-in players, but Kiyonari attained his promotion under the current system, in which the same number of games are played as at the Nihon Ki-in.

Quickest promotion to 9-dan at the Nihon Ki-in: Ishida Yoshio, 11 years. However, Ishida advanced from 8-dan to 9-dan by recommendation when he became Meijin-Honinbo in 1974 (the year after he reached 8-dan). The record by the usual route is 12 years, held jointly by Rin Kaiho, Takemiya Masaki, and Kobayashi Koichi. Cho took just over 12 years.

Most promotions in one year: Honda Kuniyoshi (Kansai Ki-in) with two. In his first year as a pro, Honda went from 1-dan to 2-dan (May) to 3-dan (November). At this time the Kansai Ki-in Oteai started in February. Two promotions in one year is impossible at the Nihon Ki-in.

Most successive wins: Ishida Yoshio, with 30 in a row going from 4-dan to 7-dan (1967 – 1970). Incidentally, Ishida holds another record. By the time he ended his winning streak, he had become a star in the newspaper tournaments; the 31st game, the one that ended the streak, was his first game in the 1971 spring session of the Oteai, which started in April, but he was so busy with other tournaments that he didn't play it till July, making it the latest start ever to a session.

Most games without a loss: Cho Chikun, with 36, including two jigos and one no-contest (because of a triple ko).

First Oteai 9-dan: Fujisawa Hosai, in 1949. Since Hosai became shodan in 1933, he took 16 years, but in the old days the Oteai system was a little tougher. The 4-dan section was divided into the A and B sections, and moving up from the B to the A section was like going up a rank. Also, promotions were decided by one's total results for the year – one couldn't just start the promotion sequence where one pleased.

Hosai was followed by Go Seigen in 1950. Go stopped playing in the Oteai after he reached 8-dan, but he was granted 9-dan on the basis of his outstanding results at this time. Hashimoto Utao became 9-dan in 1954 at the Kansai Ki-in and Sakata made it at the Nihon Ki-in in 1955. Next was Kitani Minoru in 1956.

Most 1st places: Sekiyama Riichi and Fujisawa Hosai. Sekiyama Riichi, the first Honinbo in the newspaper tournament, and Fujisawa Hosai both took 1st place seven times. In the case of Sekiyama, this is an impressive record because he retired in 1943. Next, with six 1st places each, are Go Seigen, Miyashita Shuyo, and Sakata Eio. Also worthy of note is the performance of the only woman 8-dan in Japan, Suguchi Kazuko, who has taken the top place four times.

This concludes our description of the Oteai system. In one of our 1988 issues, when we have space, we plan to publish a history of the Oteai tournament from its founding in 1927.

Suspicious Jigos and Early Resignations

by Nakayama Noriyuki

The Suspicious Jigos

Around 1935, the Tokyo Nichinichi Newspaper, which was the predecessor of the Mainichi Newspaper, sponsored a knockout tournament for young and middle-level professionals. At the time, the half-point komi system was not yet in use, so games often ended in a draw or jigo. In a knockout tournament, a drawn game had to be replayed; moreover, the players received a game fee for the replay. This was considered only natural: a game was a work of art on which one expended one's sweat and blood.

There were two mischievous players — T ?-dan and I ?-dan — who thought of a way of taking advantage of this system. When they were matched against each other, why not make all the money they could, they decided. After putting their heads together, they played two jigos in a row. When you misbehave like this, you can't stop people from becoming suspicious. The newspaper company, which was being fooled into handing over game fees for nothing, became very angry and protested to the Nihon Ki-in.

The Nihon Ki-in severely admonished the two players, who begged for forgiveness on bended knees and promised to play the next game seriously.

Well, the third game was played. Both players took a lot of time and fought with all their might, but by one of those ironies of fate, the result after a furious fighting game was yet another jigo.

The infuriated newspaper company protested in the strongest possible terms to the Nihon Ki-in and demanded that something be done about the situation, but since the third draw was not a fake, the Nihon Ki-in was unable to scold the players.

After going into a huddle, the Ki-in authorities replied that henceforth in newspaper games in knockout tournaments there would be a komi with half a point. This is the origin of the present half-point komi system; the proposer was the late Murashima Yoshinori, then 5-dan, who used to be known as the brains of the Nihon Ki-in.

Now who might these players T and I be? The number of professionals in those days was much smaller, so finding out is quite easy. There

were only two players with the initial T: Takagawa Shukaku and Takahashi Shigeyuki. I seems to have been Inoue Ichiro. I can't believe that the great Takagawa would have been guilty of misappropriating game fees, so it must have been Takahashi, who, along with Inoue, had a reputation for naughtiness at the time. The two players are probably turning over in their graves at this revelation of their misdeed, but I think the 'official secrets act' no longer applies.

Records for Brevity

Professionals usually struggle for a whole day on a game, going into byo-yomi and finishing up around the midnight hour. This is a record of misadventures in which players throw in the towel early.

The spring Oteai, 27 April 1927: Sugiura Ainosuke v. Kambara Shigeji. Something must have gone badly wrong: Sugiura (black) resigned after 23 moves. Time taken: a bare 30 minutes. The game record has not survived.

More recently, there is the game in which Su 5-dan challenged Sakata 9-dan in a preliminary round of the 7th Gosei tournament. Seventy-three minutes into the game and — a mortified resignation. Asked later for his impressions by a go journalist, Sakata replied:

'Yes, some young player, I don't know who he was, but he was really manly about his resignation.'

Su's comments: 'Next time I will have to play a little better, so that Sakata Sensei remembers my name. The losing move? Playing Sakata was the losing move.'

Long ago, the late Mukai Kazuo made the immortal remark, 'Black 1 was a thoughtless move,' but in Su's case the problem seems to have arisen even before the first move. The mistake was being matched against Sakata. His remark enhanced Su's reputation for modesty.

In two-day title matches there is the famous episode in which Kato, who was being challenged by Rin for the 34th Honinbo title in 1979, made a mistake in his analysis of a life-and-death position and resigned on the first day, the only time a top title game hasn't made it to the second day. But — this was the only game he lost in the series.

(Translated by John Power from 'Igo Club Bessatsu' No. 10)

The Magnificent Obsession

Sakata Eio and Go
by Bob Terry

When go historians of the future look back to the 20th century, we can be fairly confident that even though it has been a period in which the game has enjoyed unprecedented prosperity and popularity two great players will stand out, towering head and shoulders above their contemporaries. The two are Go Seigen and Sakata Eio. The former reigned supreme in the 1940s and 1950s; this was before the heyday of newspaper tournaments, but he bested every rival in a series of jubangos, or ten-game matches, the most grueling form of competition, and stood alone as the greatest master of non-komi go. The latter established his dominance in the 1960s in the first boom period of newspaper tournaments and komi go. For the sheer brilliance and unpredictability of his game, he has perhaps no rival in the history of go. No other player looks like coming even close to the extraordinary records that he set.

Go World has already published a biography of Go Seigen in issues 35 and 36 and we have just started a new series which will focus on his jubango career. In this issue we would also like to present the first half of a detailed account of Sakata's career. (Ed)



Old age has come to Sakata Eio. As he slips into semi-retirement, he looks back on a career that spans one of the most exciting and eventful periods of go history. It was a period of great expansion in professional go and was marked by fierce fighting; 'razor-sharp' Sakata, to give him his traditional nickname, was at the forefront. He met and defeated all the major go players of his time, collected an astounding number of titles, established records in every category. Quite simply, he set the bench mark for modern go.

The two-part article that follows chronicles the life and play of Sakata. We catalogue his records, highlight key plays from the past, and home in on his uncanny feel for the game. The reader is encouraged to experience the plays as Sakata makes them and to marvel at those unexpected brilliant moves that are the hallmark of his style, to savor, as he does, his past triumphs.

Sakata, 67 last February 15th, is no longer a top contender on today's tournament scene, but he remains a fearsome competitor. His autobiography, published in 1984, is the main source of this article. In it, he pulls no punches, and the leading characters who competed against him are given their say as well. Sakata has often been criticized for his outspoken views, but he is always willing to admit the existence of contrary opinions, which leads to a lively dialogue.

We are delighted to present, for the first time in English, a full-length portrait of a go immortal.

Born to Play Go

Speaking of me, people often say: 'Sakata is a man who was born to play go.' I also believe this is true: if go were somehow taken out of my life, there would be nothing left of me. In more than 60 years, I have never had any other real occupation, nor have I ever considered for a moment embarking on some other path. I learned to play go before I even realized it; I was captivated and gravitated to a professional career with the ease of water flowing off a duck's back.

I was born in Tokyo in 1920, the last of my parents' three children. As such I was spoiled dreadfully by my mother: I cannot remember her scolding me even once as a child. My father also was the type who gave free rein to his children. Perhaps because of being raised in this atmosphere, I have always been inclined to say directly what I think, even in the most delicate situations. Those kindly disposed toward me say: 'Sakata has an artless and unspoiled nature,' or describe me as a blithe spirit. But from the opposite standpoint, I am seen as 'egotistical and arrogant.'

My nature is such that I cannot accept unconditionally anything that I do not believe or cannot agree to. For instance, even if ten people around me declare that something is yellow, if I perceive it as being red I will insist that it is absolutely, unequivocally red. This kind of simple-minded directness has often led me to bungle matters, but putting aside the question of whether such an uncompromising attitude is good or bad in daily life, I can declare that in the world of match play it is by no means a minus.

I learned to play go just around the time I entered elementary school. My father was a great lover of go and once he got started he would play far into the night, oblivious of the time. He was strong for an amateur in those days, perhaps 3-dan. I remember that he received from the Kiseisha of the late Karigane Jun'ichi 9-dan a shodan diploma, which he framed and proudly displayed. About that time he quit his job and opened a general store, but he left it to my mother to run. Instead, he would assemble people from the neighborhood every day and play go on the second floor. I picked up the game from watching, which made my father very

happy. As I got stronger, he began to harbor thoughts of my becoming a professional and he sought the advice of a player who ran a dojo nearby, Inoue Kiyu.

'Does this child show any promise and will he be able to put food on the table playing go?'

'There is no way of telling whether he can put food on the table unless he tries. That is secondary to whether he wants to follow this path. If one worries about such things, it's best not to become a go player.' I have never forgotten these words of Inoue Sensei: they represent a turning point in my life.

By the summer of 1927 it had been decided that I was to become a professional, and my father took me to the dojo of Masubuchi. She was 26 or 27 at the time, a good-hearted, down-to-earth person who disliked gaudiness and always went without make-up. Upon the occasion of my entering the dojo, the Sensei played a teaching game with me. I placed seven handicap stones on the board and since I was amateur shodan at the time I was fully confident of victory. But as the game progressed, the white stones displayed wondrous power. I was stunned at losing. What surprised me more than my loss, though, was the realization that players of such strength truly existed.

I became an insei at the Nihon Ki-in immediately after this. In those days, the strongest players, from Honinbo Shusai Meijin on down, would direct the study of the inseis personally. I hardly think we deserved such attention, but I look back on that time with fond gratitude.

Shusai Meijin was in many ways a taciturn man, but he tried to bequeath in some degree his experience to us inseis. When analysing one of our games, he would cut to the heart of the matter by saying, 'That move is too thin,' or 'That move is filled with fighting spirit.' He never gave a detailed analysis; his policy, rather, was to give the pupil a hint of the truth and let him work out the details for himself.

When the Meijin would play teaching games (and I had the honor of playing such games with him twice), he would not follow the usual practice of having the student take a number of handicap stones. Instead, he would just give the student black and play lightning go with him. I remember hearing the Meijin describe the

instruction he himself had received as a child and the philosophy behind it.

'It was thought back in those days that it was best to have the student play extremely quickly; in short, to have him grasp intuitively the essence of go, and the faster the better. Even during my childhood it was in my personality to consider matters deeply and despite the fact that I was still very weak, I would be reluctant to play a move while the situation was fuzzy in my mind. Consequently, in the course of a game I would at times lapse into thought only to find my face roundly slapped. My Sensei would then snap out: "If you as a mere child mull over your games like this, you will never develop into a full-fledged professional player." I guess that method is one way of cultivating a youngster's innate talent, but it was a painful period for me.'

Meijin Shusai was around five feet tall and I doubt that his weight ever exceeded much more than 85 pounds during his lifetime. But despite his size, when he faced a go board he would sit motionless and overwhelm his opponent with sheer will power. The limpid and intense 'eyes of the Meijin' made a strong impression on me as a child, even more than the way he comported himself, with the bearing of a champion.

The Oteai in those days was run much the same as it is today. A preliminary tournament was held once a year to determine who would qualify to become a professional player. From a group of about twenty inseis, only two or so would earn the coveted title of Shodan.

At that time Fujisawa Kuranosuke (who has since changed his given name to Hosai) was the target of all the inseis. Fujisawa started studying at the Nihon Ki-in after I did, but he was a year older and already two stones stronger than I. Shusai Meijin looked fondly upon him and he was regarded as the Nihon Ki-in's honor student. It was natural that the gifted Fujisawa should shine in that atmosphere, leaving the rest of us inseis in the shade. Therefore, it was important to try to keep up with him, and if we couldn't catch up, at least we would make sure that he did not get too far ahead.

Sometime during this period I secretly came to regard Fujisawa as my own special rival. It turned out to be a great boon for me to have such an accomplished contemporary to spur me on.

One year, then two years, went by in a flash, and then it was my third year at the Nihon Ki-in. I somehow made it into the preliminary tournament for entrance into the Oteai with Fujisawa. If I succeeded in the tournament, I would be shodan. I would not have a fullfledged career yet, but I could then play in the Oteai and also receive a salary, small as it might be. That was 1932 and I was 12 years old.

It was a golden opportunity, but I was still not strong enough and I failed. Fujisawa, however, scored a splendid success and 'graduated' from insei status. I felt as if I had lost a rival.

A year later, when the preliminary tournament was held again, I entered convinced of my own strength and ready to kiss my life as an insei goodbye. Unfortunately, an unexpectedly strong adversary lay in my path.

I was the youngest of the eligible inseis that year. On top of that, I was not very robust. My adversary was cunning and, though not as strong as I, he came up with a plan. Even now I wonder if someone older had not given him the idea. The plan he decided on was to sit me out.

Back then there was no time limit set for the games. My opponent took advantage of this by using two or three hours for each move from the very beginning. The game started in the morning, but by the middle of the night only ten moves had been played. I was lacking in endurance and he knew it. He spent the time gazing at the ceiling, standing up to use the restroom, and after a few moves he mumbled something about being tired and stretched himself out on the tatami mats. Every tactic possible to stretch out the time was brought into play. He knew that I was bound to get tired: that was the plan. He just would not play.

At that rate we played through the night and into the next day. That was the rest day before the next game. With that in the back of my mind, I wondered if my stamina would last through the week.

It was a dirty trick. By the time I realized what he was up to, it was too late. I was done in by the lack of time limits for this tournament. I was sleepwalking the third day, and the fourth was just a blur.

Other opponents used the same tactic. They would tire me out and settle the game late at

night when I no longer knew what I was doing. The ringleaders seemed to be Isogawa Masao and Suzuki Goro. Amongst themselves they played at the usual pace; only against me did they slow down.

I was the favourite that year, but I left defeated. I had been vanquished by a formidable enemy: time.

I turned 14 the next year. Fortunately, the Nihon Ki-in authorities, appalled by the endurance race the previous tournament had turned into, had adopted tournament clocks, so I was able to win the tournament without hindrance. Three others became shodan with me.

Fujisawa was already 3-dan by then. At this time a new breeze was blowing through the go world: Kitani and Go Seigen had invented the 'New Fuseki.' We of the younger generation were caught up in this inspired craze and vigorously spread the word.

Game One: Sakata v. Go Seigen

White: Go Seigen 5-dan (aged 20)

Black: Sakata Eio 1-dan (aged 14)

Played on 25, 26 November 1934.

This game was played to commemorate my promotion to shodan. When I look at it now, I realize how skillfully Go Seigen neutralized the two-stone handicap. His manoeuvres are light and full of intelligence; Black's awkward moves stand out. I still had no style to speak of; I

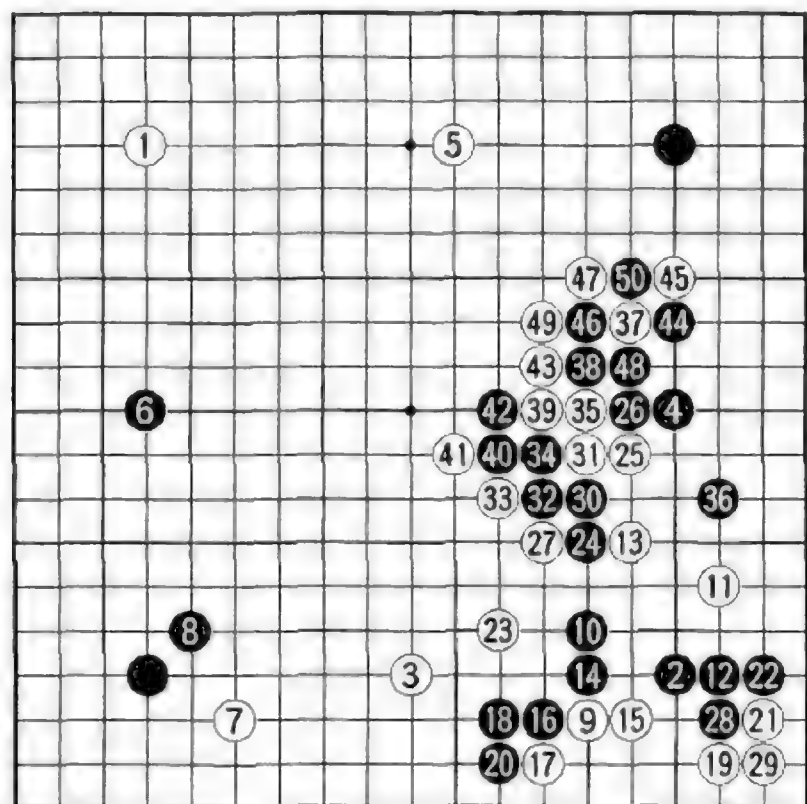


Figure 1 (1 - 50)

just relied on fighting strength and reading. This was my first experience of a light, nimble style of play.

Note that at this time his 5-dan rank made Go one of the top players of the day. There were no 8-dans and only a couple of 7-dans, but Go was already their equivalent in strength.

Figure 1 (1 - 50)

Black 10 shows the influence of New Fuseki. White's corner invasion leaves him with thin positions on the side and at the bottom, but Go was an expert at handling weak groups. The highlight of the opening is his severe attack at 27.

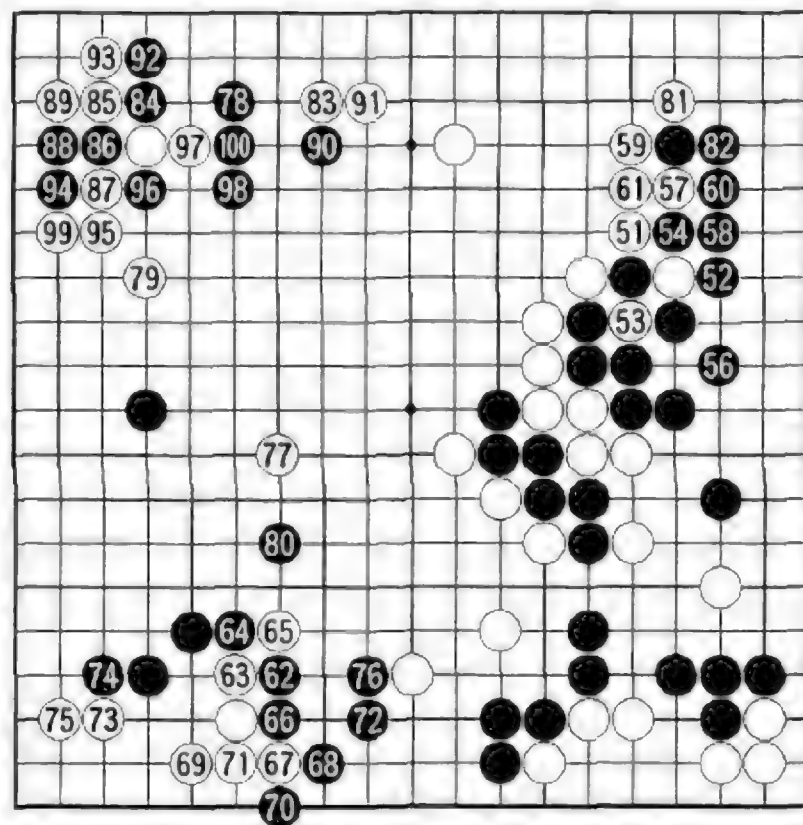
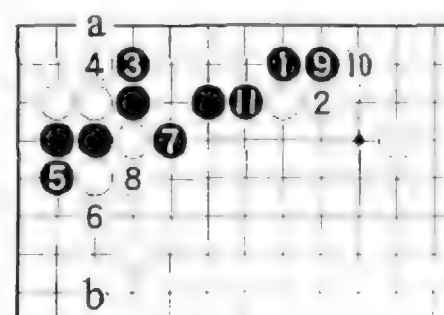


Figure 2 (51 - 100)
55: connects

Figure 2 (51 - 100)

The result to 61 — profit v. influence — is equal. Black uses his sente to attack at 62; Black 81 would also be big, but it is just an endgame move. However, Black 80 is timid; White 83 makes the game a close contest.

Black 90. Better to settle the group quickly by attaching at 1 in Dia. 1. Black can later aim at 'a' and 'b.'



Dia. 1

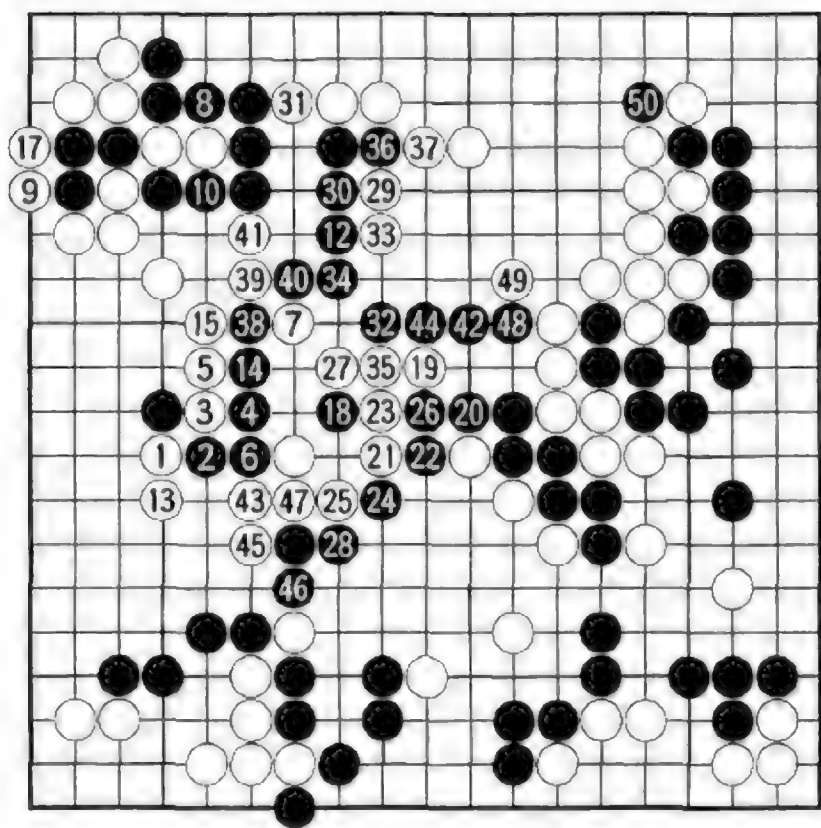


Figure 3 (101 - 150)
11: throws in; 16: takes

Figure 3 (101 - 150)

Black 2, 4. Black has to be careful in this fight because of his weak group above, but still he should have seized the opportunity to atari at 13 at some stage.

When White attacks at 19, Black decides to take the centre and stake the game on being able to rescue the group at the top. This is a forerunner of the shinogi strategy for which Sakata became famous in his prime. Up to 44 it works — at the cost of sacrificing a small group.

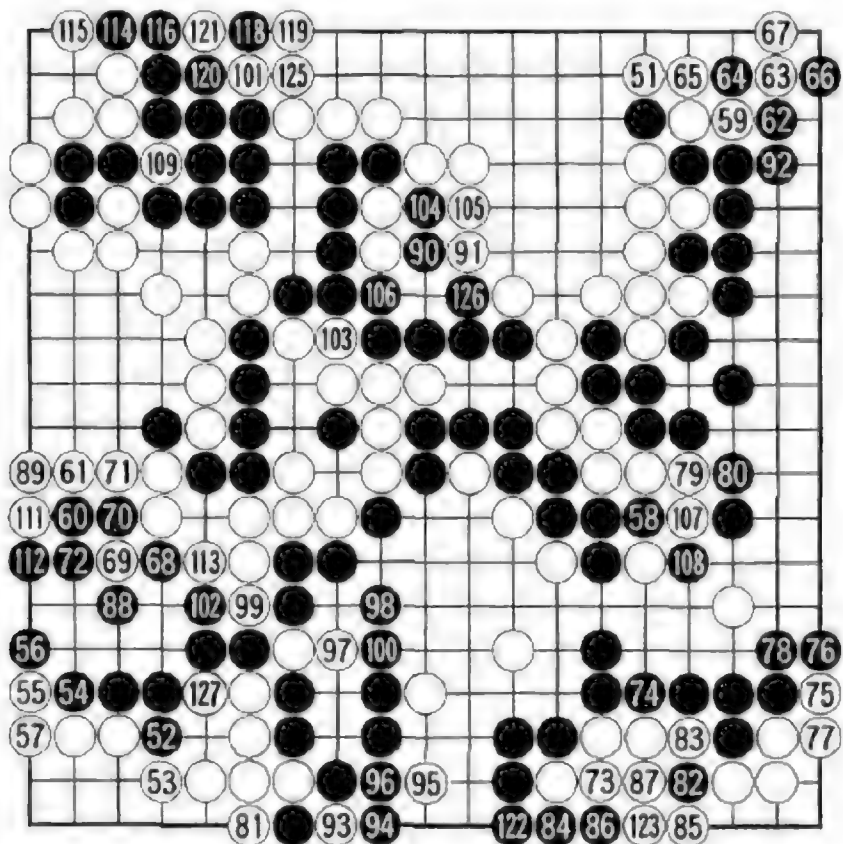


Figure 4 (151 - 230)

110: retakes; 117: two spaces to the left of 109; 124: ko; 128: connects (at 121); 129: connects (left of 93); 130: connects (at 109)

Figure 4 (151 - 230)

White 71. If White captures Black 68, Black will play 71 and live on the side.

White 81 is the losing move. If at 126, making miai of 92 and 101, the game would have been dead even. The sente move of Black 90 is big.

Black wins by 2 points.

Living for Go

I first participated in the Oteai as shodan, a bright spot in my life as a rookie professional. I gathered my strength and set my sights once again on Fujisawa.

In today's Oteai, as soon as one obtains the points needed for advancement, one is automatically promoted, but in those days promotion was granted just once a year. Even if one garnered the necessary points in the first half of the year, one could ruin it all by having a poor second half. In short, all of one's games were taken into account, making it an extremely strict system.

During the 1935 Oteai, the year of my first participation, I compiled a record of six wins and two losses for an average of 75 points. As a result, I rose to 2-dan the next year. In 1937 I was promoted to 3-dan and in 1938 to 4-dan.

However, even though I advanced at the fastest rate possible, the one player I could not catch up to was none other than Fujisawa. Since he had become a professional two years earlier than I and had advanced just as quickly, there was a 2-dan gap between us that I could not bridge. For more than ten years I watched as Fujisawa stayed a step ahead of me. It was not until at length I advanced to 9-dan, four years after him, that I finally felt equal to my splendid rival.

Around the time I earned the rank of 4-dan I starting giving go lessons at the Tokyo branch of the Manchurian Railroad. I received 40 yen a month for visiting the company go club four times. I don't know how much that would be today, but I was still living with my parents and it was welcome pocket change. I was also able to visit Manchuria in 1940 because of my connection with this company.

Interestingly enough, I was accompanied on the trip by a 14-year-old rookie who had just become professional shodan: Fujisawa Shuko. Over the years I was fated to battle him in many important matches, but at the time we

were simply two wide-eyed youngsters visiting the front line of the war in China. Starting from Harbin, we had first class train passes valid for travel anywhere we wanted to go. I recall being terribly embarrassed when an army officer politely asked whether we were visiting relatives at the front.

The spring session of the Oteai was about to begin when we returned to Japan. After compiling a 5-win, 3-loss record in the first half of the cycle, I finished up strong in the autumn with 7 wins and one drawn game (jigo) to earn promotion to 5-dan. This is another important hurdle for a professional player to overcome. The 4-dan diploma admonishes the player to cultivate an earnest, studious approach to the game while the 5-dan diploma welcomes the player to the elite world of professional go. It must not be forgotten that in those days no players were rated higher than 7-dan, except for the Meijin at the top. Momentum can carry a player just so far; to proceed to 5-dan and above demands a higher level of skill.

Up to this point in my life I had lived only for go. However, unlike my contemporaries, I rarely studied the game seriously. My days as a youngster were carefree, but I was still loathe to devote my energies to scholarly contemplation. The difference between my own approach to go and a studious player like Sugiuchi Masao, now 9-dan, was like day and night. But even compared to the average professionals who rose later into the upper echelon of the go world, I imagine I was the least motivated to study.

On the other hand, I was determined to try my skill on a practical level, cultivating my innate talent and polishing my technique amid standard tournament conditions. The prevailing philosophy dictated that one study the classic games and, other than that, devise schemes to utilize the usual openings (fuseki) to apply one's own expertise in corner play (joseki). I wonder if I wasn't unique among the players of my generation in my own approach to the training and practice of go.

All go players pour their energy into the game, but I speak from experience when I say that the results are decidedly mixed. On the one hand I heard constantly that 'Sakata is lazy in his studies.' So I determined to hone my own skills and let events take their natural course.

I compiled mediocre records in the 1941 and



A cartoon from Kido showing a scene from the 1935 spring Oteai. The cartoon makes fun of Sakata 1-dan's habit of clutching his face during a game.

1942 Oteai, but in 1943 I placed second to Kitani Minoru and rose to 6-dan. During these years the Second World War erupted and, naturally enough, as it progressed players were drafted or mobilized or else suffered the disruption of unexpected evacuations. It was not a good time to be a go player.

Military service was expected from the weak as well as the strong. I underwent a physical examination in 1941 and was classified 4C, that is, in the lower pool of potential soldiers. I was not a sickly person but unquestionably thin and weak. In spite of this I received a notice in 1944 to report for training.

I was drafted into the Eastern Division, 12th Corps, based in the Azabu district of Tokyo. The next day I was ordered to report to the heavy machine gun unit, obviously not a case of the right man for the right job. Had I been sent for training as an orderly in a hospital or a hygienic unit I could probably have stuck it out, but heavy machine guns were quite beyond me.

In order to get us recruits into shape we were often ordered to run laps around the parade grounds. Since we were all inducted from the lower pool of draftees, we were a pale and emaciated group lacking energy. That was to be expected during those times, and we endured as best we could. But after a month and a half of this daily torture we were dismissed, and I returned to my parents' house in the Omori section of Tokyo.

A little while later I took a job at a munitions supply company. I had been teaching go at

the club there, and the president offered me a position as a junior accountant. This was the first and only time in my life that I worked at any occupation other than go.

Right after that the war ended. It had been the most miserable experience of my life. Whatever happens, war must be prevented in the future.

Leaving the Nihon Ki-in to Form the Igo Shinsha

In the early summer of 1945 we faced the ruin of a lost war amid desperate conditions. The Nihon Ki-in was destroyed in the hail of B-29 firebombs. Up to then my family had managed to protect our home, but it turned out to be a hopeless cause. The house ended up a total loss, and we moved to the countryside of Saitama Prefecture to stay with an acquaintance of my father's.

The only talent I ever possessed was the ability to play go. But at that time the Nihon Ki-in was a gutted shell and my fellow go players were scattered in all directions by the vicissitudes of the battlefield or evacuations. After the war each took up whatever occupation was at hand, whether it was farming or trading or something else. I myself played mahjong with a passion.

By spring of the following year the process of reviving the Nihon Ki-in was in motion. For the time being, various professional activities, including central operations, staffing, accounting, and even some Oteai games, were conducted at the home of Iwamoto Kaoru in the Meguro district of Tokyo. The Oteai moved from one makeshift site to another throughout the city as players appeared wearing uniforms, civilian attire, and even traditional Japanese clothing. Despite the food shortages, inconveniences of all kinds, curtailments of freedom, and so on, I was overjoyed at the opportunity to play again. I rose to 7-dan in that year's Oteai.

In the summer of 1947 another contretemps developed at the Nihon Ki-in. Admittedly times were difficult, but even so the Ki-in seemed at



Sakata wins a game against Go Seigen

a standstill; a pall seemed to hang over our lives. It was no wonder that a number of observers questioned the old-fashioned, feudalistic ideas that seemed to be holding up progress.

With Maeda 7-dan in the lead, Kajiwara 5-dan, Yamabe 4-dan, Kuwabara 3-dan, Shiori 3-dan, Kodama 3-dan, Ishige 2-dan, and myself at 7-dan left the Nihon Ki-in to form a new association of players, the Igo Shinsha. It was not an act that had been fully considered — with the exception of Maeda, we were a group of impetuous young bachelors. We walked out declaring that 'We intend to revolutionize the go world and lead it from feudalism.' But even though we raised this rousing, if vague, call, we had not made a single preparation for our independent existence and we were faced with a number of problems from the very start.

We had the backing of a prominent businessman, but the all-important tournament sponsorship was lacking. That was the beginning of the end. Another major factor was the small number of members of the group. The lack of diversity in our matches, as well as the stereotypical play that resulted, contradicted our avowed aim of 'revolutionizing the go world.' Within two years our group had disbanded.

During this time, the Nihon Ki-in, which took

our defection seriously, resolved that it was imperative to develop a prosperous go world. Under the leadership of Tsushima Juichi, a committee was formed to solicit contributions. A large two-storey building was bought at Takanawa to serve as the main branch of the Nihon Ki-in. The dedication ceremonies were held in April 1948, and the first official spring session of the Oteai was also inaugurated. In October the Ki-in was formally opened to the public. The next spring, that of 1949, all of the scattered members returned and the ill-conceived Igo Shinsha fiasco was all but forgotten. [This building remained the headquarters until the construction of the eight-storey Ichigaya building in 1971. It is now used for insei matches.]

First Match with Go Seigen, Then Marriage

Those rebellious days with the Igo Shinsha were accompanied by the sowing of wild oats on my part, both with women and gambling. I was often out all night playing mahjong, at times in some awfully seedy clubs. I suppose that if I had saved the money that I foolishly lost to the hustlers and gangsters I played, I might even have had enough to buy a house.

At around this time it was arranged for Go Seigen 8-dan to play a three-game match with me. Sponsorship was provided by the Yomiuri newspaper, and I was happy about the ten thousand yen per game that I received.

Unfortunately I lost all three games. Afterward I remarked that 'I do not think that in terms of talent I am inferior to Go Seigen, but I was bowled over by his strength of will. This kind of result indicates that I have not developed completely. Somehow I must become psychologically stronger.'

It was said that my remarks were arrogant and spoken out of regret for the lost match, and perhaps there is some truth to that. However, go is a balance of skill and character; lacking the requisite technical polish supplemented by a mature personality, it was only natural that I lost to Go Seigen. My remarks should be judged within that context.

During the period that preparations for the match were being made, arrangements for my marriage were also made. I've always felt that there was a link between the wedding and the three-game match with Go. In fact, I spent all the match money I earned for my honeymoon

with my bride, Hisako, at the Yugawara hot spring resort.

Shortages were acute at the time and we had to bring our own ration of rice to the inn. Still, I expected the resort to be crowded, especially because the country was in the midst of a series of national holidays. Other than my wife and myself, however, the place was empty. It was as if we had reserved the inn exclusively for the occasion.

The Honinbo Match that Changed the Go World

In 1951, at the age of 31, I became challenger for the Honinbo title. This 6th Honinbo title match between myself and Hashimoto Utao attracted the attention of the go world and fans everywhere as few have before or since.

Hashimoto had lost the 3rd Honinbo match that featured the famous game played on the outskirts of Hiroshima as the atomic bomb was dropped but he recaptured the title in 1950. He then proceeded to leave the Nihon Ki-in with a number of other players to form the Kansai Ki-in. Following the escapade with Igo Shinsha, this act of defiance was viewed with grave concern.

The matter was complicated by the fact that a provision in the rules stipulated that the holder of the Honinbo title belong to the Nihon Ki-in. Some players insisted that Hashimoto be stripped of his title, but the majority felt that it would be best to win it back over the go board.

It was a match that neither Hashimoto nor I dared lose. Particularly so for Hashimoto since prospects for the new Kansai Ki-in virtually hinged on the outcome. But I too felt tremendous pressure; the hopes of the entire Nihon Ki-in rested on my shoulders. I couldn't sleep because of the tension and I was plagued with intestinal troubles. In any event, it was clear that Hashimoto would play the leading role in the upcoming match, and as the supporting player I determined, in all humility, simply to test my prowess against my opponent.

Hashimoto was favored to win the match, so it came somewhat as a surprise when I jumped out to a commanding 3-1 lead. I played dispassionately yet with a keen presence of mind. As far as I was concerned, the match was as good as won. 'Hashimoto must not be as strong as everybody thinks. I suppose that I must be the strongest player around now. I wonder

what name I should adopt when I become Honinbo . . . ' Thoughts such at these occupied my time. I was floating on air.

Supporters held a party for me the night before the fifth game to encourage me to take the title. At the same time Hashimoto fans were told to 'accept the inevitable and take the loss as a man.' Few expected any other result. Hashimoto himself stated that before the game, 'I washed my neck to give the executioner a clear target.' The contrast between each player's feelings could not have been greater.

I was determined to settle the matter then and there and by the second day of the fifth game I knew I had the advantage. However, in the latter stages of the game I found myself behind on the clock. Before I knew it I had lost the edge and step by step I found myself giving up ground. In the end, it was a self-destructive lack of control that decided the result.

After losing that game my situation in the match rapidly deteriorated. I lost the sixth and seventh games through impatience and the inability to convert superior positions into wins. Then, too, I became overly cautious after suffering the loss of the fifth game. I complacently assumed that it would be easy enough to win one of the last two games. After starting the match with an aggressive fighting style, I became conservative and tentative. In the end it was a valuable, if painful, lesson of my young career: I found out how difficult it is to win a match even when one has one's opponent on the ropes.

Whether I was jinxed by the result of this match or not I do not know, but for the next ten years I failed to become challenger for this title. Each year I would be viewed as the front-runner in the Honinbo league and each year I would be edged out.

The consequences of the match were perhaps even more far-reaching for Hashimoto. By winning in such a dramatic fashion he established the viability of the Kansai Ki-in. In so doing he pushed himself to the limit, and that may have contributed to the ease with which Takagawa defeated him to take the Honinbo title the next year.

Returning to Tokyo by car after the match, I stared blankly at the passing scenery and from time to time brushed away bitter tears, carefully concealing my emotions from my traveling companions. The pain and humiliation I felt were

terrible. It took me a long time to recover from the shock.

Yet I wonder if losing this match was not a blessing in disguise. Had I beaten Hashimoto and become Honinbo at such a young age, chances are I would have been defeated in the title match the next year. I was not mature enough then to deal with such success. However, enduring that stunning blow to my ego paved the way for the later triumphs of my career.

Game 2: Sakata v. Hashimoto Uтарo

This game, the final one of the Honinbo title match, was the decisive game of the first part of Sakata's career. In those days, the Honinbo was the only newspaper title, so winning it was like being Kisei—Meijin—Honinbo these days. Sakata's inability to capitalize on one of his three chances to take this series doomed him to a decade out in the cold.

White: Sakata Eio 7-dan

Black: Hashimoto Uтарo, Honinbo

Komi: 4½; played on 27, 28 June 1951.

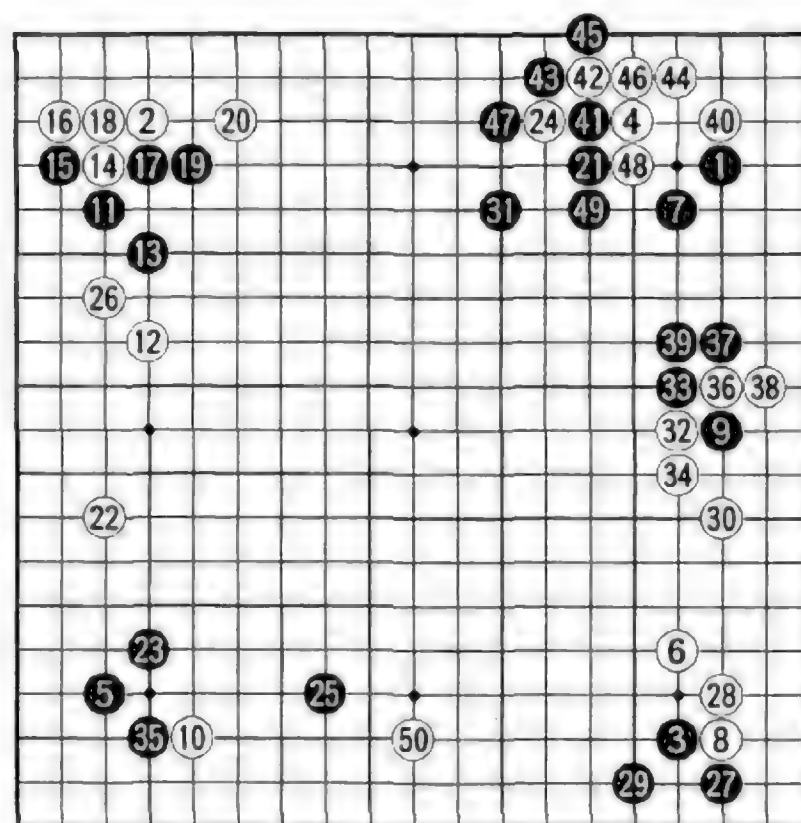


Figure 1 (1 – 50)

Figure 1 (1 – 50)

Sakata: 'From around Game Six Hashimoto had been playing with great steadiness. His move at 13 here made me realize that he had regained his composure.'

Despite all the tenukis, the game gets off to a leisurely start.

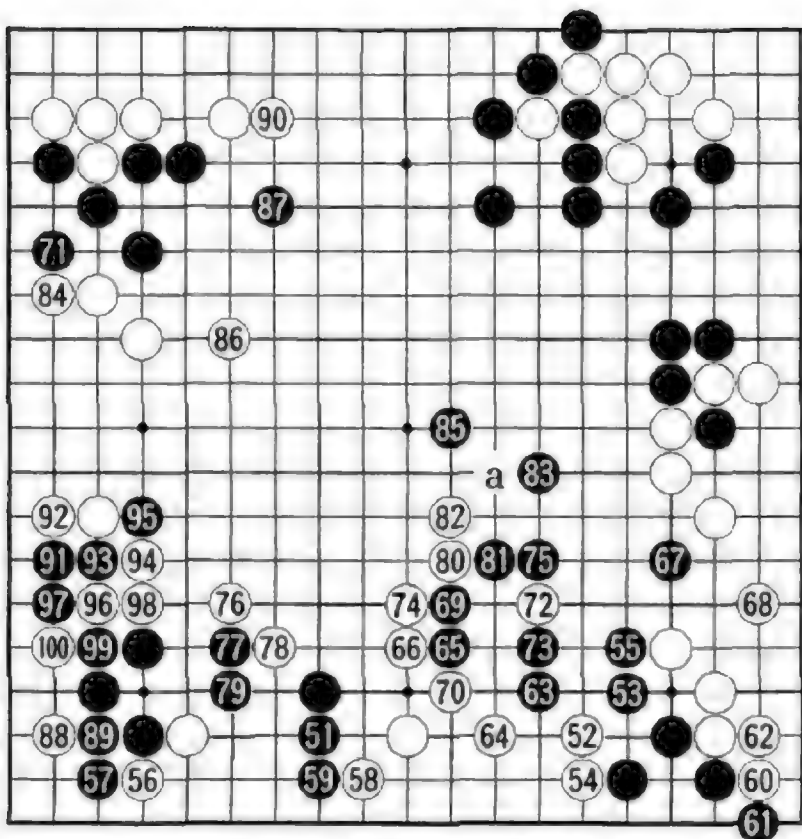


Figure 2 (51 – 100)

Figure 2 (51 – 100)

White 84. White should continue the attack with 'a'.

White 94 is an overplay: White should just extend at 95. Black 95 starts a complicated fight.

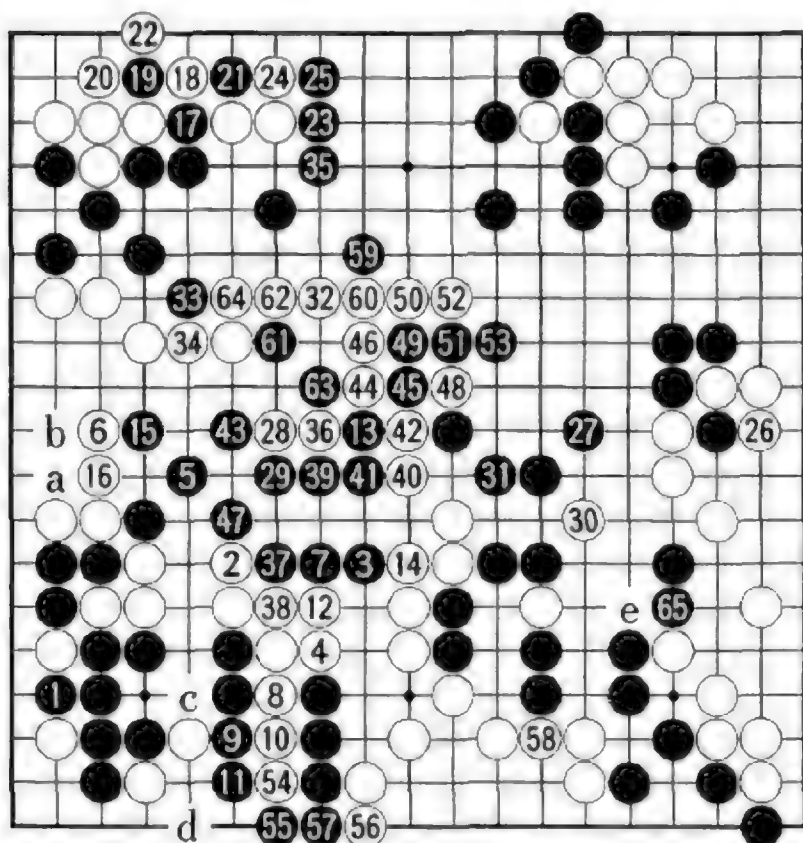


Figure 2 (101 – 165)

Figure 3 (101 – 165)

Black 5 threatens a ko with Black 16, White 'a'. Black 'b', White 6, Black 15.

Black 11. If at 54, White has the aji of a ko with White 11, Black 'c', White 'd'.

Up to 15, Black reduces White's moyo in sente.

White 30 is an extremely skillful move. After this, a white stone at 1 in Dia. 1 (next page) makes miai of cutting at 'a' and cutting with 2

Sakata's Career (1)

Born on 15 February 1920 in Tokyo. Became a disciple of Masubuchi Tatsuko 6-dan in 1927. Made shodan in 1935.

1936: 2-dan 1938: 4-dan 1944: 6-dan

1937: 3-dan 1941: 5-dan 1949: 7-dan

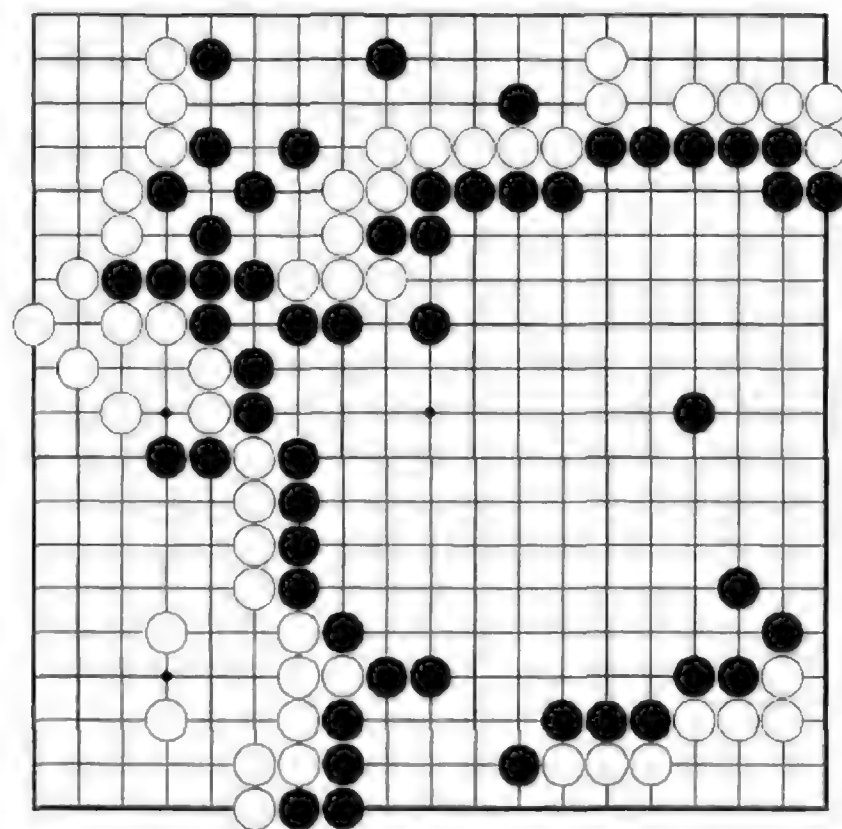
1951: Challenged Hashimoto Uтарo for the 6th Honinbo title but lost 3-4.

1952: Promoted to 8-dan. Defeated Kitani Minoru 3-1 in a newspaper-sponsored title match. Won the Yomiuri Newspaper-sponsored Five Strongest Players League. Defeated Miyashita Shuyo 3-1 in a newspaper-sponsored title match.

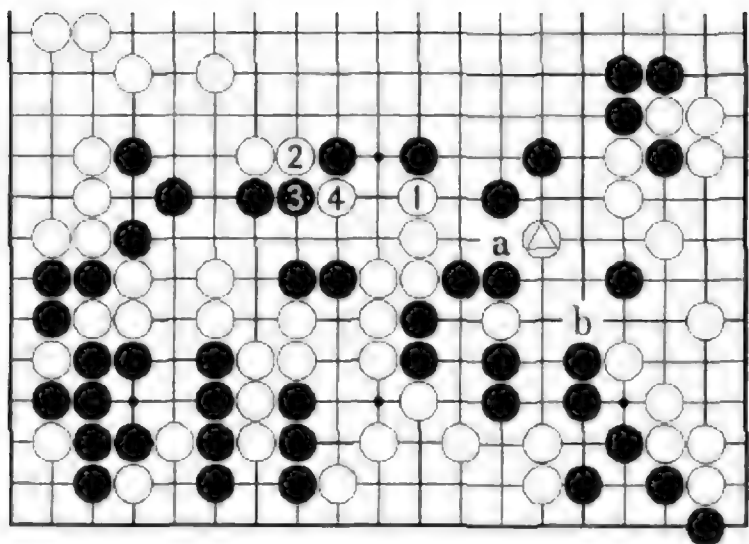
1953: Lost to Kitani in play-off to determine 8th Honinbo challenger. Defeated Takagawa 3-0 (+1 jigo) in a newspaper-sponsored match. Won the Yomiuri Newspaper-sponsored Five Strongest Players League. Defeated Go Seigen 4-1 (+1 jigo) in a six-game match.

1954: Defeated by Go Seigen 6-2 in a jubango.

1955: Promoted to 9-dan as first player after
Continued on page 67



'Razor-sharp' Sakata is renowned for the depth of his reading and the stunning moves that often result from his analysis. On later pages we will offer several positions from Sakata's games for the reader to examine and attempt to find the next move, along with hints for where to look. The position above (not a problem) is taken from a game Sakata played as black against Cho Chikun, who resigned here. Black leads despite conceding White four corners and side territory.



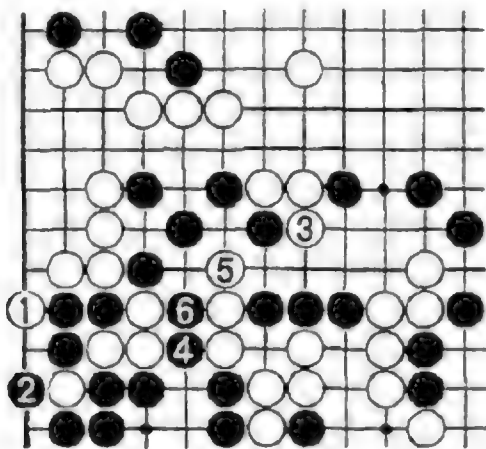
Dia. 1

and 4. The marked stone sets up a large capture at 'b.'

Sakata: 'When Hashimoto answered my 30 by connecting at 31, I thought that the game was good for me. At the same time, I foolishly became transported with joy, and images of what it would be like being Honinbo flickered across my mind. That showed how immature I was, how far I still had to go.'

White 38. If White had forced with 1 to 5 in Dia. 2, then switched to 'e' in the figure, he would have won. In the figure he is forced to live in gote up to 58 and his brilliancy of 30 goes to waste.

White 44. Sakata misses another chance. If he simply extended at 45, Black would have to live with 47, so White could switch to 'e' and keep the lead.



Dia. 2



Hashimoto Utarō (a recent photo)

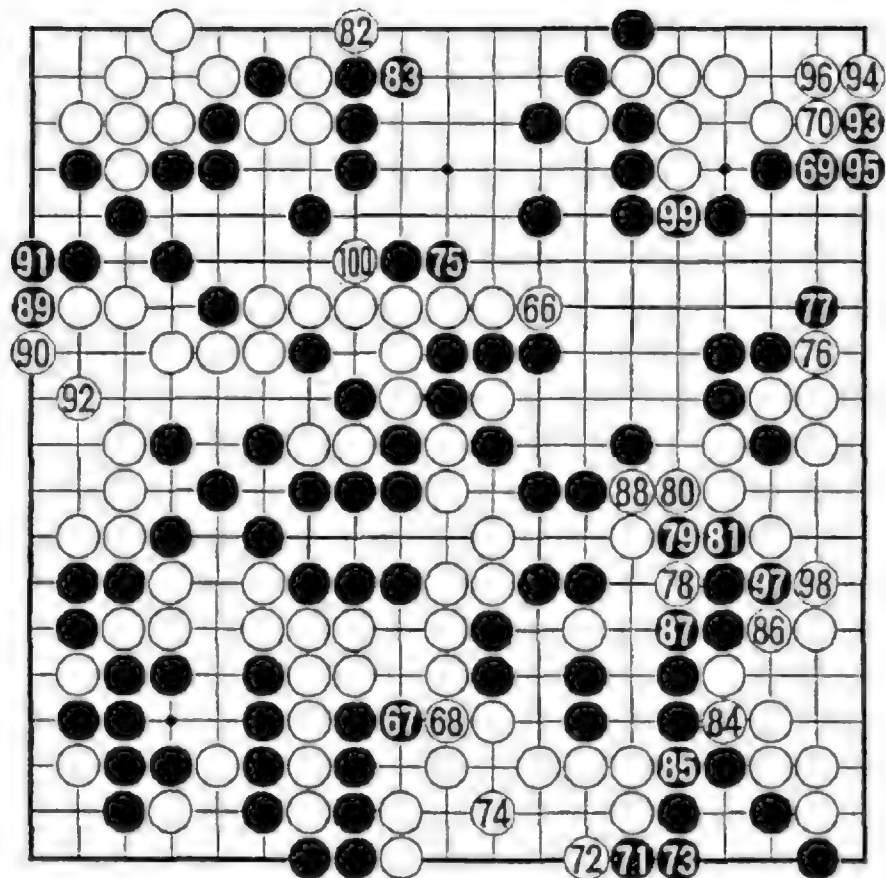


Figure 4 (166 – 200)

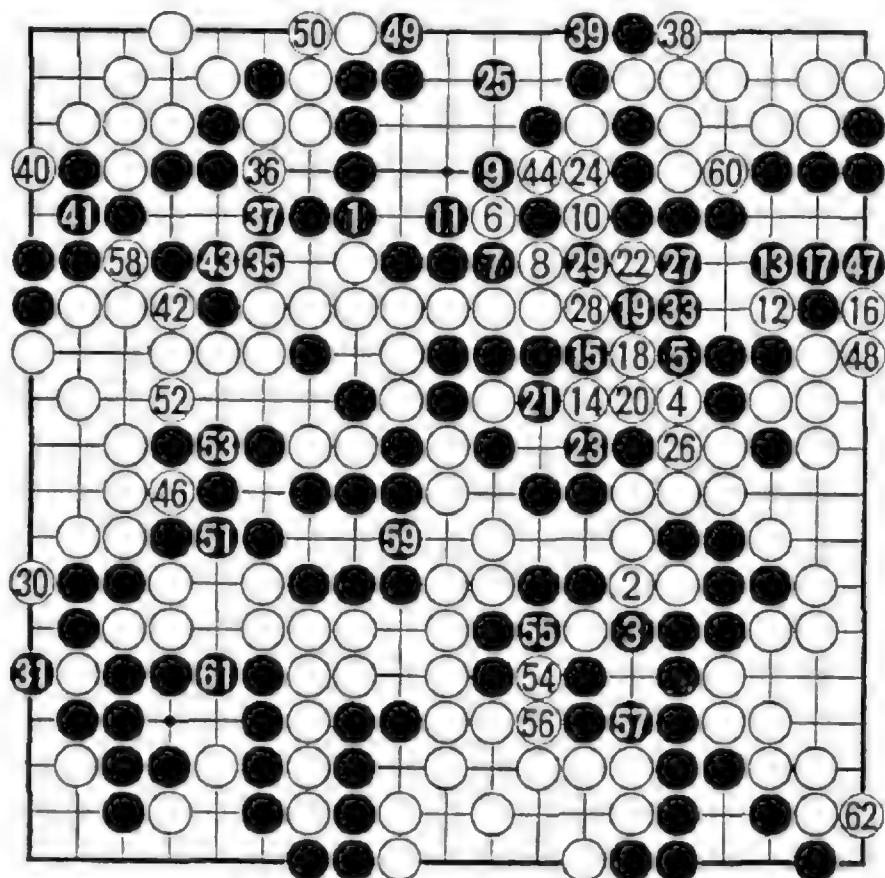


Figure 5 (201 – 262)

32: ko (at 22); 34: connects (at 29); 45: connects (at 6)

Figure 4 (166 – 200), Figure 5 (201 – 262)

If Hashimoto had lost this game, it is not inconceivable that the Kansai Ki-in might have shared the fate of the Kiseisha.

Black wins by 3 points.

The Six- and Ten- Game Matches with Go Seigen

I rose to 8-dan in June the next year. Around the same time I won a number of minor tournaments and a match with Go Seigen was arranged. At that time, Go had defeated Fujisawa (Hosai), Hashimoto, Iwamoto, and Takagawa, among others, in ten-game matches (jubango). Since I had not yet established a niche amidst these

elite members of the go world, the match was limited to six games, and I was slated to play white in only two of the games.

After losing badly to Go in the first game (for the fourth straight time in match play), observers gave me little chance to hold my own, much less win. That explains why the playing site of the second game at Hakone, where I was scheduled to play white, was deserted.

During the middlegame, Go made a mistake; as the endgame approached I was conscious of my advantage. But I had had so many winning games overturned before I knew it that I was leery of taking anything for granted. When the game was over and it had been determined that I indeed was the victor, I bounded into the room of Miyashita Shuyo, the official observer, to say, 'For the first time in my life I have beaten him!' I remember the look of stunned disbelief on the face of Go Seigen himself — he could not have dreamed that he would lose with black in a no-komi game.

This win gave my confidence a great boost; it dispelled the oppressive weight I had felt on my shoulders when I approached the match. The third game ended in a draw (jigo) and I won the last three games in a row to set the go world buzzing.

Immediately after the match I was approached by representatives of the Yomiuri Newspaper. When they asked me to play a jubango with Go Seigen I jumped at the chance; in fact, I eagerly repeated my acceptance before they could respond to my initial reply. This was a mistake. I should have bided my time for the next six months or so, cleared away all other distractions and then, when things had settled down and the time was ripe, I could have faced the jubango calmly. But I was carried away by winning the 6-game match and perhaps I also dismissed Go Seigen as an opponent too quickly. It was a foolish mistake . . .

The ten-game series was billed as the 'Match of the Century,' but because of the difference in our rankings I played with the advantage of holding black twice in every three games. That helped me in the first game, where I played safely and solidly to win by three points. My strategy was not an unreasonable one: if I could win all the games in which I held black, I had a fair chance of taking the match.

It seems that my win in the first game set Go Seigen to thinking, for he opened the second

game with a play on the 3-4 point. This was the first game in close to twenty years that, playing black, he had made his first move anywhere other than the star-point. It was not a question of the 3-4 point being a stronger play, rather one that offered a change of pace. Then, too, he may have recalled his younger days when he often secured firm wins with that move. In any case, I was overwhelmed by Go's fighting spirit and lost the game.

I lost the third game because of two or three faulty plays in the endgame, but Go, playing white the next game, did the same thing, and I won by two points. It was my loss in the fifth game that looms large in my mind as the one that decided the outcome of the match.

Ironically enough, it was played at the same inn where I had lost that fateful fifth game of the Honinbo title three years earlier. This time I played white, and very poorly at that, to lose by ten points. Go Seigen gathered momentum from this win and gained straight victories in the remaining three games to take the match 6-2. I was beaten down to the point of playing black every game (the handicap for a 2-dan difference), so, as previously agreed, the jubango ended prematurely right there.

I was not pleased with the result, but I consider myself lucky to have played a series of games with Go Seigen in his prime. I am always proud that I won the six-game match, a feat that no other player accomplished before or after me. The fact remains that my name went into the record book beside that great player's.

Go Seigen was blessed with wonderful innate talent, but he also cultivated a scholarly disposition and when he was young he poured himself into intense study. In that respect, he is the antithesis of the type of player I am. There are similarities in our styles: we both play all out and devise plans to get the most from the moves we make. Each of us came to prominence in our youth, dominated our generation, and produced significant games full of sharp, crisp plays that even today repay close study. By the same token, Go was born and bred before the age when games played with a komi became the norm, and so it was from necessity that he developed his style of playing with maximum effort. The question remains, however, whether he was prepared to adapt to the introduction of the komi system. I do not mean to speak ill of the man, but I wonder if the precocious nature of

his talent, combined with his drive to play wholeheartedly, served to burn him out prematurely. Undoubtedly, the traffic accident he was involved in contributed to his decline. Over and above that, though, it is clear that the peak period of his play was shortened somehow.

As a player grows older, he must change his style of play if he wants to continue achieving good results. I myself, among others, have found it necessary to approach the game with this attitude.

Game Eight from the Jubango is given below. Game Two can be found in GW36, page 12.

Game Three: Sakata v. Go Seigen Jubango, Game Eight

White: Sakata Eio 8-dan

Black: Go Seigen 9-dan

No komi. Played on 24, 25 June 1954.

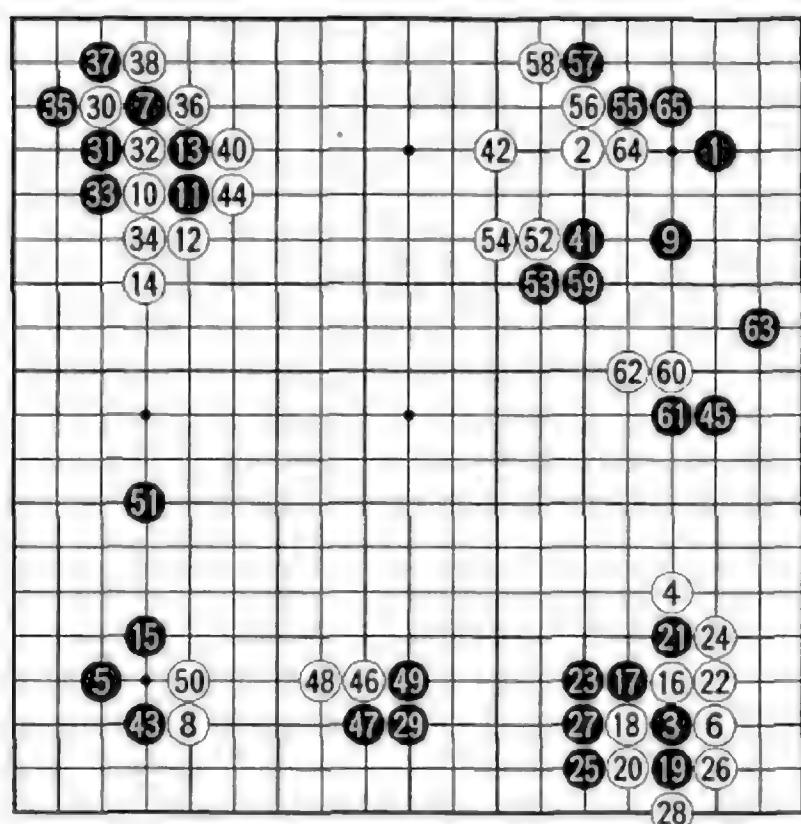


Figure 1 (1 - 65)
39: connects

Figure 1 (1 - 65)

Sakata's unprecedented opening moves up to 10 reveal something of his desperate frame of mind as he trailed by three games in the match. By playing all out, he hoped to be able to engineer a comeback.

Figure 2 (66 - 130)

White 80 is a superb probe. If Black connects at 82, White cuts off the centre stones with White 86, Black 87, White 81, Black 93, White 'a'.

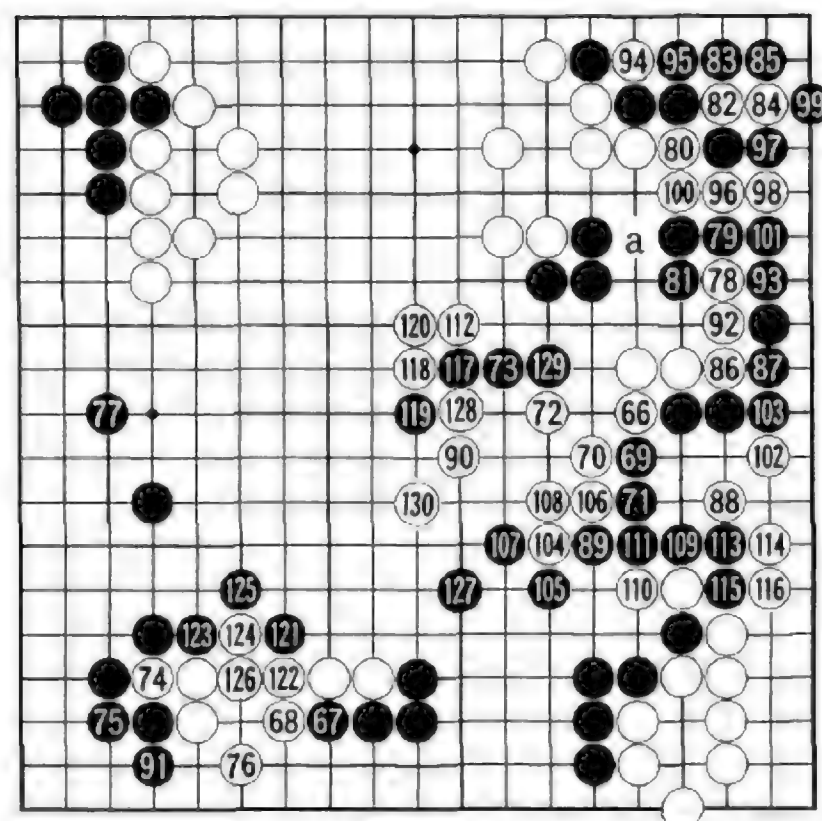
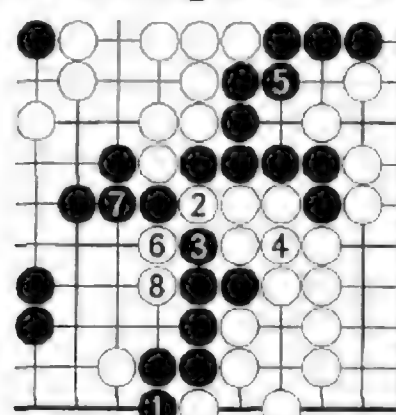


Figure 2 (66 - 130)

The result on the side is quite good for White: he is playing well. The only quibble is that he missed a good chance to hane at 91 before playing 86 or 88.

White 102. White should force with 123 first. White 112 was another chance to strengthen this group.

Black 121, 123. Sakata admits that he was jolted by this attack. White has to be very careful in answering Black's attack because of his eyeless group on the right; he can't afford to let Black contrive a double attack (karami) on the two groups. Apparently, however, White has no chance of winning after this.





A galling defeat at the hands of Go Seigen

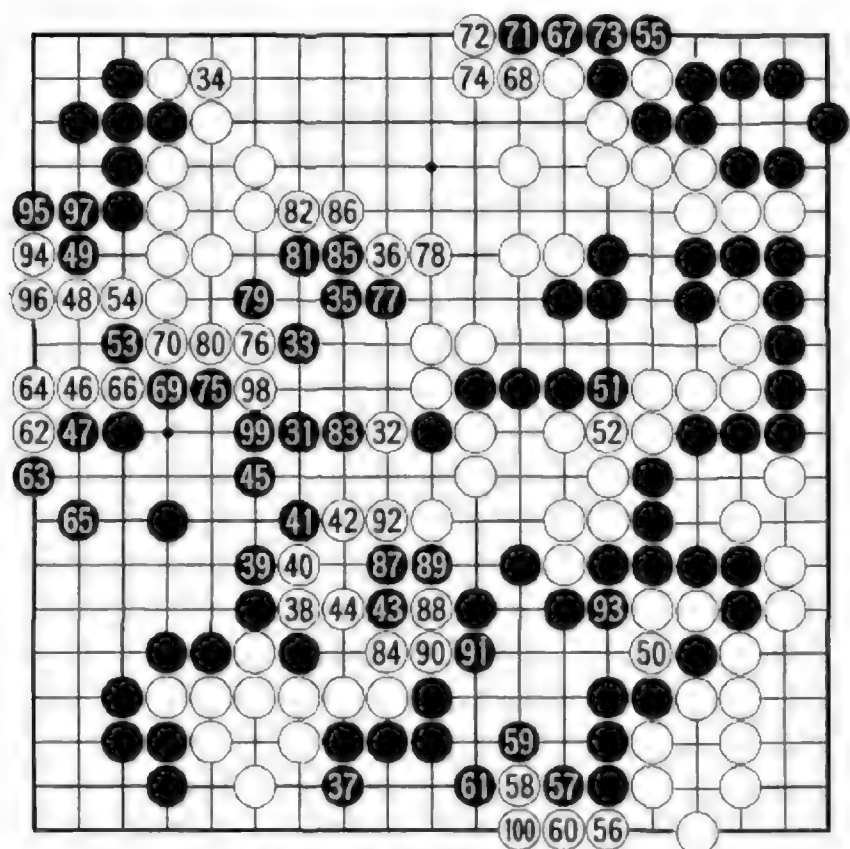


Figure 3 (131 - 200)

Go played only two games a month. Of course, the result did not hinge on this factor, but when Go gets an advantage he is hard to beat.

Despite this demanding schedule, I managed that year to win a majority of my games in the Oteai, scoring an average of 75.71. This secured me promotion to 9-dan at the age of 34. Fujisawa Hosai and Go Seigen had gained that rank six years earlier, the former through the Oteai (he was the first to do so), the latter by recommendation; Hashimoto Uтаро had also been awarded the same status by the Kansai Ki-in. Still, it was a distinction to have earned promotion in the manner I did, and I received congratulations from many supporters, including the Prime Minister, Hatoyama Ichiro.

Sakata's Career (2)

Fujisawa Hosai to reach that rank by Oteai system. Defeated Takagawa 2-0 in 2nd Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship.

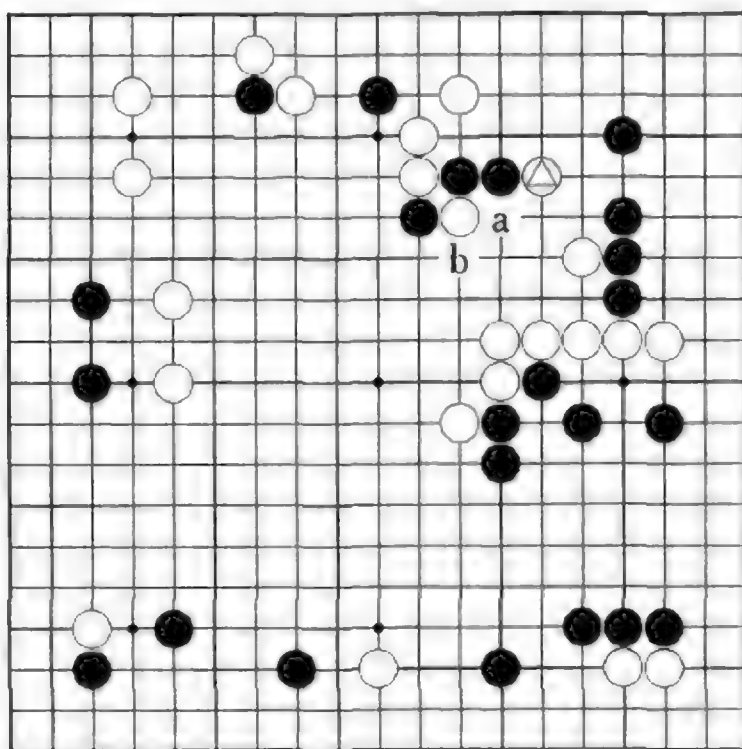
1956: Defeated Hashimoto Uтаро in Eastern/Western Telegraph Lightning Go Ch'ship. Defeated Sugiuchi Masao 2-1 in 3rd Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship. Won 1st Top Position title by 6-2 score in league of 9 players. Defeated by Hashimoto Uтаро in 3rd NHK Cup. Lost 4th Oza title to Hashimoto Uтаро 0-2. Won 1st Lightning Go Meijin title, defeating Magari Reiki.

1957: Defeated Kubouchi Shuchi in 3rd Lightning Go Telegraph Ch'ship. Lost 2nd Top Position title to Kitani 1-3. Won 4th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship, defeating Sugiuchi 2-1. Defeated Fujisawa Hosai in 4th NHK Cup. Won 2nd Lightning Go Meijin title, defeating Miyashita 2-1.

1958: Won Tokyo Newspaper Cup, defeating Kitani 2-1. Defeated Kitani 2-0 in 5th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship. Defeated Kitani for 5th NHK Cup. Lost play-off for Honinbo challenger to Sugiuchi.

1959: Defeated Kitani 3-2 in 4th Top Position title. Defeated Takagawa 2-0 in 6th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship. Defeated Takagawa for 6th NHK Cup. Won 2nd Strongest Player title with score in league of 8-1

Continued on page 69

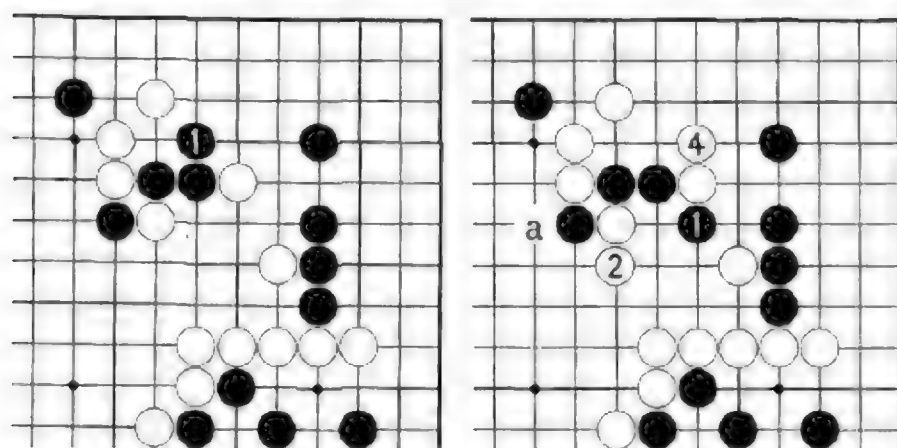


Problem 1

Black to play. White has just made a nose attachment with the marked stone. If Black plays 'a,' White builds up his center position with 'b.'

Answer on page 68

Answer to Problem 1



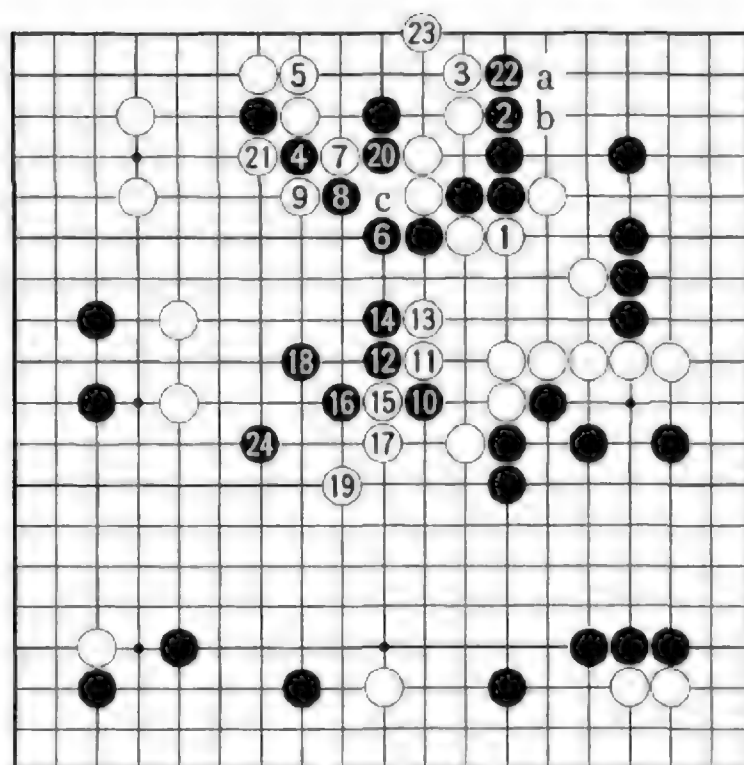
Dia. 1

Dia. 2
3: tenuki

Black 1 in Dia. 1 makes bad shape but is an exquisite move nonetheless. It provoked a lot of comment at the time, and some even referred to it as 'the exquisite empty triangle,' a phrase that harked back to 'the exquisite dame move' of Yasui Sanchi (see 'Page from Go History' in GW28 for Sanchi's move).

If Black tries to hane at 1 in Dia. 2, he cannot play elsewhere after White 2. Even if he plays at 'a,' White 4 costs him his pivotal stones.

Dia. 3 shows the continuation in the game.



Sakata v. Hashimoto Utarō, Honinbo
Game 1, 6th Honinbo Title Match (1951)

White should hane at 22 with 3: after Black 'a,' White 3, he would get a cutting point at 'b' to aim at. Up to 24, Black succeeds in bursting through the centre; later he can go back and save his two stones with 'c.'

Along with his felicitations, Mr. Hatoyama sent three samples of his own calligraphy. The one that read 'Burning Heart, Ice-cold Eyes' is representative of the group. When I called at the Prime Minister's residence later on, he explained that, 'It is important that one bring the full range of one's fighting ability to bear when facing an opponent, but if one thinks only of this one will lose composure and presence of mind. The essential point is that both strength and an imperturbable spirit must be joined to ensure a win.'

The next year, 1956, I won the 1st Annual Top Position title, and it seems that this victory was the catalyst that sparked my successful tournament and match play in the years to come. In particular, I captured quite a few of the new titles that were beginning to appear around this time.

The Top Position title was one of these new titles. It was created by the Asahi Newspaper as an extended version of the Oteai tournament. From its inception, the Oteai served as the only means by which a professional could enter into the upper echelon of the go world, and all of today's top players gained their rankings through

it. However, few fans at the time showed any interest in the participating players' standings in the tournament. This was unfortunate, as it resulted in the increased isolation of professionals from the amateur go scene. The Top Position title was designed to kindle interest in the Oteai by answering the question of who among of the higher ranked players was truly the strongest.

I won the first title with the best score of the nine participating players: six wins, two losses. Later the series was to be discontinued, turning into the Pro Best Ten title, but before that I won two more Top Position victories, those of the fourth and the final sixth terms.

Two years after the establishment of the Asahi-sponsored tournament, the Yomiuri Newspaper announced that it was determined to find out who in effect was the true Meijin of the era and for that purpose was creating the Strongest Player title. Six players participated: Go Seigen 9-dan, Fujisawa Kuranosuke 9-dan, Honinbo Shukaku, Kitani Minoru 8-dan, Hashimoto Utarō, and myself. It was a round robin tournament, with each participant playing one game with black and one with white against every

The Top Position Title

Sponsored by the Asahi Newspaper. No komi (if the title match was tied 2-2, there was a komi of 4½ in the final game). After the 1st title, the winner of the league challenged the title holder.

1 (1955). Sakata: 6-2. (The first league was a nine-man league, the other participants being, in final order, Sugiuchi, Maeda, Takagawa, Shimamura, Miyashita, Iwamoto, Kajiwara, and Shinohara. The last two lost their places in the next league.)

2 (1957). Kitani beat Sakata 3-1.

3 (1958). Kitani beat Shimamura 3-2.

4 (1959). Sakata beat Kitani 3-2.

5 (1960). Fujisawa Shuko beat Sakata 3-1.

6 (1961). Sakata beat Fujisawa 2-1-1 jigo.

The Strongest Player Title

Sponsored by the Yomiuri Newspaper, this title was the forerunner of the Meijin title. Rules: 6-man league, playing each opponent twice, no komi.

1 (1958). Go Seigen: 8-2.

2 (1959). Sakata: 8-1-1 jigo.

3 (1960). Sakata. Go Seigen: 6-3-1 jigo.

other player, no komi being granted to White.

Go Seigen won the first title (1958) with an 8-2 score, and one of his two losses was playing black against me. It had been six years since he last suffered a loss holding black and the previous loss had also come at my hands (in the six-game match).

The next year, 1959, I won the 2nd Strongest Player title with the score of 8 wins, 1 loss and 1 jigo. This gave me a total of four titles for the year, including the NHK Championship (which I won for the third straight time) and the 4th Top Position Title, which I won back from Kitani Minoru 9-dan, who had stripped me of it two years previously.

Up to that time, Kitani had the reputation of being a 'tragic player.' He became the challenger for the Honinbo title three times and all three times he let the opportunity slip away. It seemed as if he would never win anything big. All the same, no one ever considered Kitani as being unskilled and when he defeated me to become both in name and fact the strongest professional player he could no longer be labeled 'tragic.' I regarded him as an older, distinguished colleague, since he was my senior by eleven years.

Sakata's Career (3)

(+1 jigo).

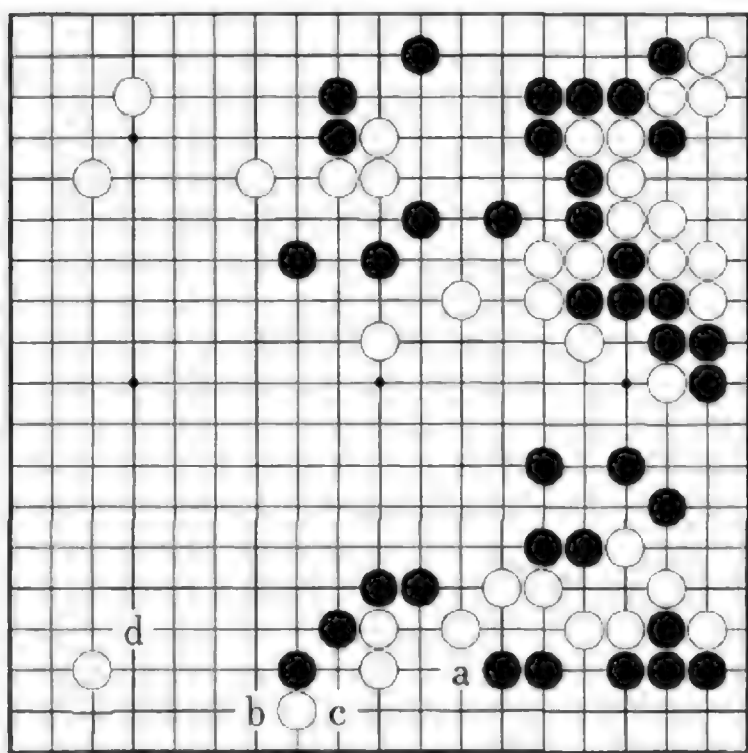
1960: Lost 5th Top Position title 1-3 to Fujisawa Shuko. Defeated Takagawa 2-0 in 7th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship. Instruction tour of China.

1961: Defeated Fujisawa Shuko 2-1 (+1 jigo) in 6th Top Position title. Defeated Kitani for 8th NHK Cup. Defeated Fujisawa Shuko 2-1 for 8th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship. Won play-off for Honinbo challenger, then defeated Takagawa 4-1 in title match to become 16th Honinbo. Took the name of Eiju. Lost 6th Lightning Go Meijin title to Fujisawa Hosai 0-2. Defeated Takagawa 2-1 for 9th Oza title. Defeated Takagawa 2-1 for 2nd Nihon Ki-in No. 1 Position title. Captured a record total of seven titles in one year.

1962: 17th Honinbo: defeated Handa Dogen 4-2. Lost 9th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship to Takagawa 0-3. Scored 8-4 in Yomiuri Newspaper-sponsored Meijin title league for 3rd place. Defeated Hashimoto Uтаро for 9th NHK Cup.

1963: 18th Honinbo: defeated Takagawa 4-2. Challenged for 2nd Meijin title and defeated Fujisawa Shuko 4-3 to become the first Meijin-Honinbo in history. Defeated Fujisawa Hosai 2-0 for 11th Oza title. Defeated Takagawa 2-0 in 3rd Nihon Ki-in No. 1 Position title.

Continued on page 71

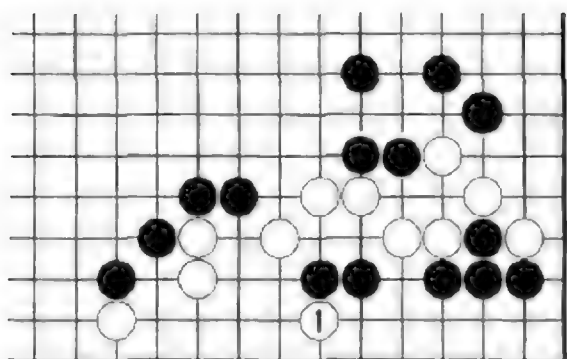


Problem 2

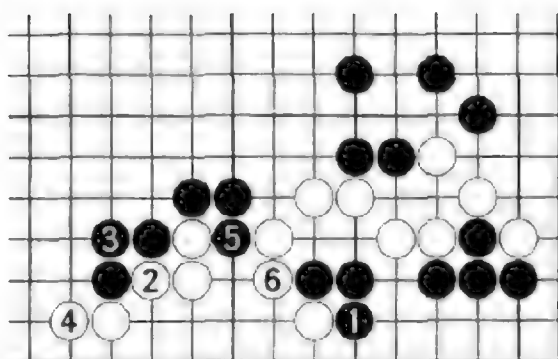
White to play. If he plays 'a' to defend the cutting point, Black plays 'b,' forcing White 'c,' then takes the initiative with 'd.'

Answer on page 70

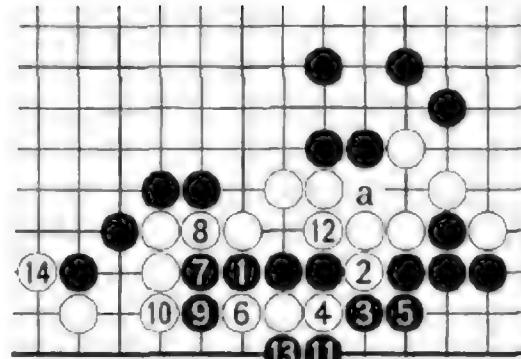
Answer to Problem 2



Dia. 1



Dia. 2



Dia. 3

Sakata v. Fujisawa Shuko 8-dan

Game 1, 6th Top Position Title Match (1960)

White 1 in Dia. 1 is played at a most unusual place, but Sakata had read out the situation some time before. The point is that if Black blocks at 1 in Dia. 2, White easily dodges his

attack with 2 to 6. Or if Black tries to counter-attack with 1 in Dia. 3, White cleverly sacrifices three stones to escape up to 14. And since White manages to get in the move at 12, Black cannot even look forward to picking up the tail end of the group with 'a.'

But I was impressed with his energetic, youthful approach to the game. More than anything, he seemed to play go with zest, and I came to the conclusion that therein lay the source of his strength. I was appreciative of my good fortune in being able to compete with my celebrated rival at the peak of his career.

That 1959 Top Position title match with Kitani was a rocky affair. I won solidly with black in the first game, but lost two in a row after that. To be down 2-1 in best-of-five title play puts tremendous pressure on the losing side. Kitani Sensei used his steamroller technique to the hilt, and I wondered if I had a chance. However, in the next game, playing white, I gambled on a ko and came up on top; then the championship hinged upon who could win the final, sudden-death victory.

Takagawa Honinbo compared Kitani to Mohammed Ali and myself to Joe Frazier. The writer for the sponsoring Asahi Newspaper wrote that, 'Kitani's go belongs to the 19th century, Sakata's to the 20th.' I took this to mean that Kitani Sensei was perceived as a romantic, old-fashioned player who was determined to read out any and all variations that might come up during the course of a game, while I was viewed as a realist concerned simply with targeting and evaluating the key variations in critical, complicated situations.

During this period I also established my first significant go record: in early 1961 I defeated Fujisawa Shuko 2-1 to win the 8th Nihon Ki-in Championship and set the record of seven straight wins of this title. All together, I won

12 titles in this tournament, including the final three that closed out the series, and years later I was designated Honorary Champion of the Nihon Ki-in.

Game 4: Sakata v. Sugiuchi 4th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship, Game One

White: Sugiuchi Masao 8-dan

Black: Sakata Eio 9-dan

Komi: 4½. Played on 6, 7 March 1957.

Figure 1 (1 - 70)

The opening is not very good for Black. White's attack at 50 works well, and Black is not happy with the result to 69.

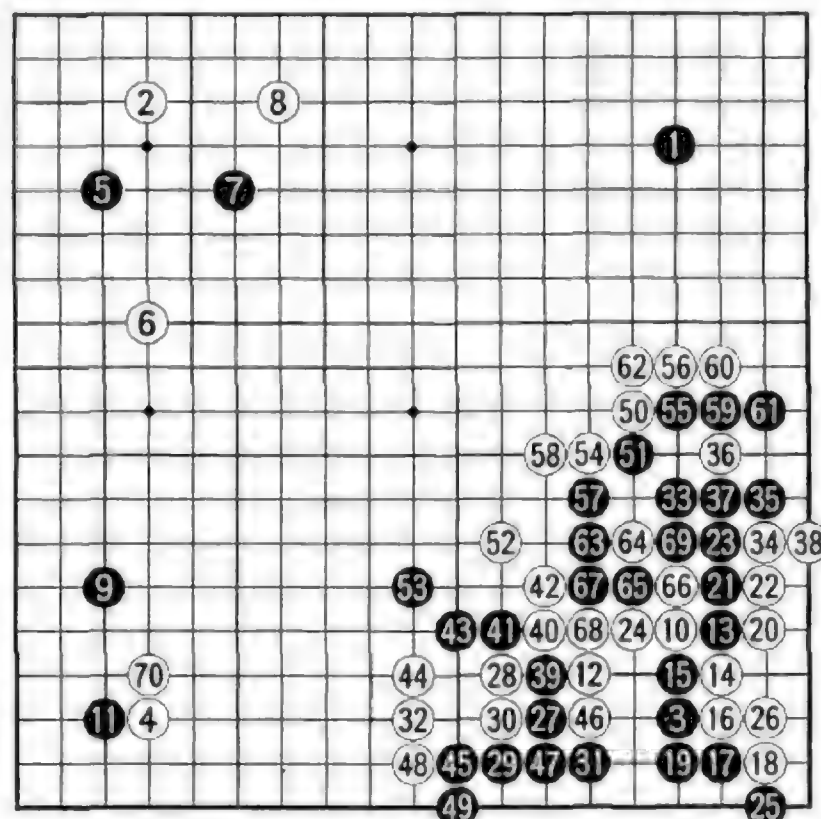


Figure 1 (1 - 70)



Sakata playing Sugiuchi

This was Sugiuchi's second challenge in a row. Both times he lost by the same margin.

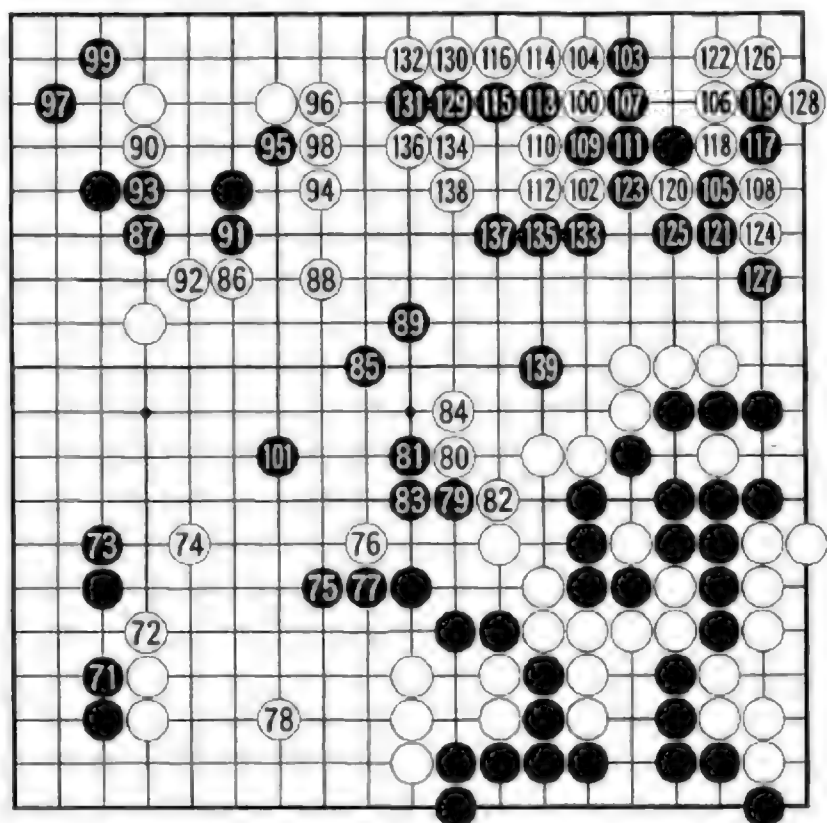


Figure 2 (71 – 139)

Figure 2 (71 – 139)

White 98 is too conservative: White should play elsewhere and aim at attacking the corner group later by attaching to the left of 99.

Black 101 looks slow, but Sakata was confident that this was enough to win. Sugiuchi apparently agreed – his invasion at 106 is a desperation measure which rebounds on him.

White resigns after Black 139.

Sakata's Career (4)

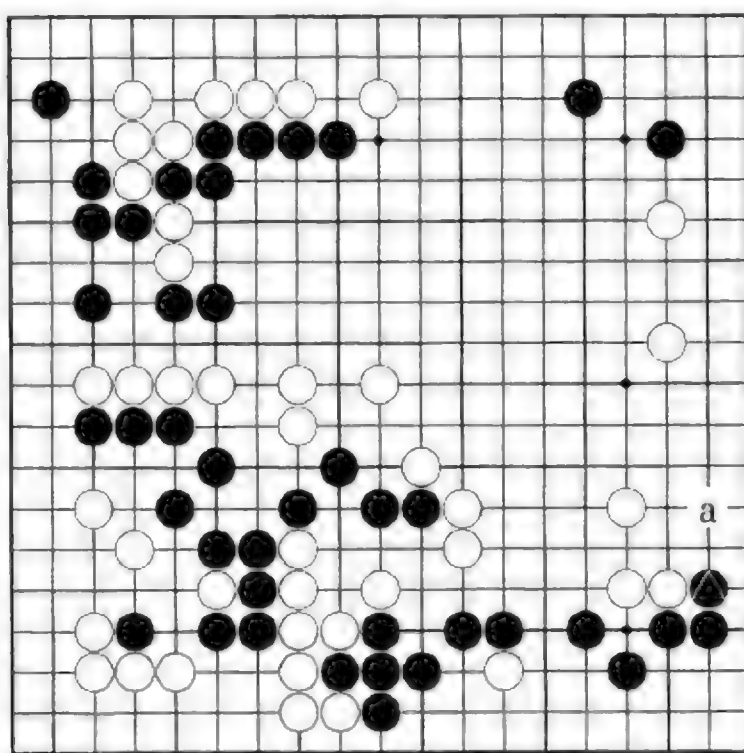
Awarded the 1st Shusai Prize.

1964: 19th Honinbo: defeated Takagawa 4–0. Defeated Takagawa 2–0 in 1st Pro Best Ten title. Awarded the 2nd Shusai Prize. Defeated Fujisawa Shuko 4–1 in 3rd Meijin title. Defeated Takagawa 3–0 in 11th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship. Defeated Kajiwara Takeo 2–0 in 12th Oza title. Defeated Fujisawa Shuko in 11th NHK Cup. Defeated Ohira Shuzo 2–0 in 4th Nihon Ki-in No. 1 Position title. During this year Sakata amassed a total of seven titles, missing only the Judan title, while compiling a record of 30 wins to 2 losses.

1965: 20th Honinbo: defeated Yamabe Toshiro 4–0. Lost to Rin Kaiho 2–4 in the 4th Meijin title match. Defeated Miyashita in 12th NHK Cup. Defeated Miyashita 3–1 in 12th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship. Defeated Ohira 2–1 in 5th Nihon Ki-in No. 1 Position title.

1966: 21st Honinbo: defeated Fujisawa Shuko 4–0. Lost to Rin 1–4 in the 5th Meijin title match. Lost 13th Nihon Ki-in Ch'ship to Ohira 1–3. Defeated Takagawa 3–2 in 5th Judan title. Defeated Rin 2–1 in 14th Oza title. Lost 6th Nihon Ki-in No. 1 Position title to Otake Hideo 1–2.

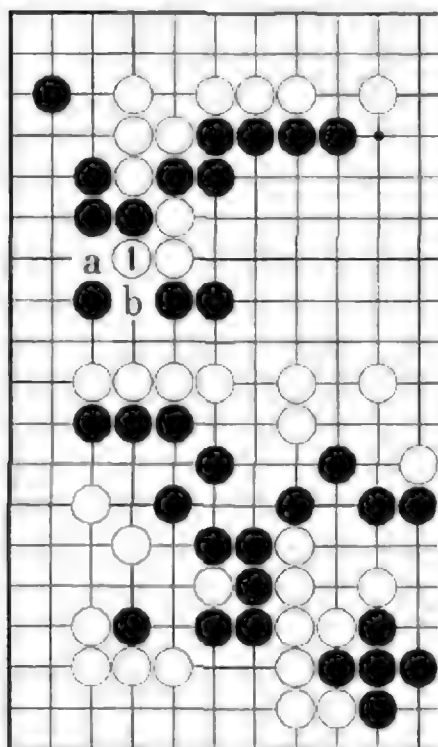
Continued in Part 2 (GW51)



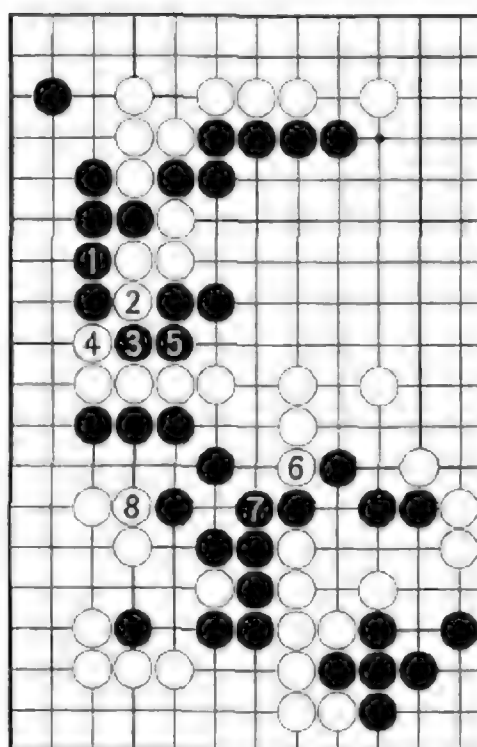
Problem 3

White to play. Black has just curled under with the marked stone, but before defending at 'a' White has an exquisite forcing move to play elsewhere. Answer on page 72

Answer to Problem 3



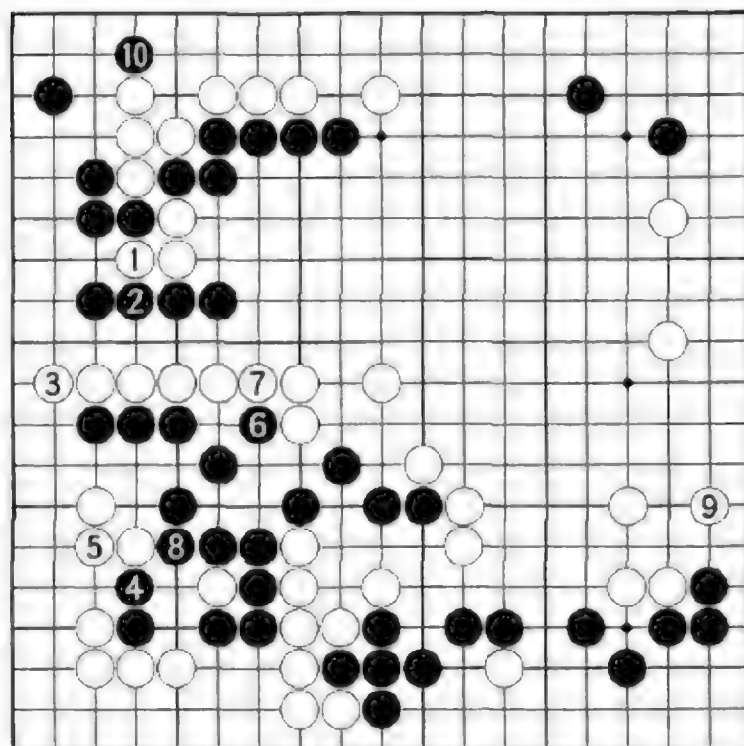
Dia. 1



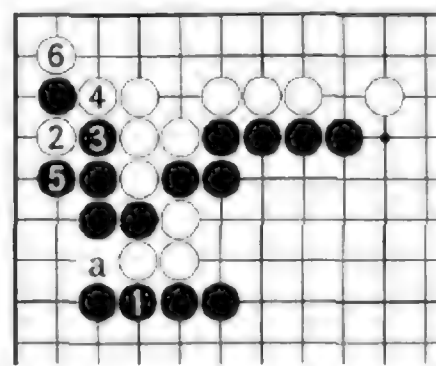
Dia. 2

*Sakata v. Hashimoto Utao 9-dan
16th Honinbo League (1960)*

White 1 in *Dia. 1* gives Black the choice of answering at 'a' or 'b,' but whatever he does he is going to have problems. If he answers at 1 in *Dia. 2*, White plays 2 to 6 and then kills Black's large group with 8. In the actual game Black played 2 in *Dia. 3*, and White played 3 to 7, forcing Black to live in gote, and then went back to defend at 9. Black played 10 in order to forestall the endgame profit White can make with



Dia. 3



Dia. 4

moves 2 to 6 in *Dia. 4*. Again the three white stones come in handy because of the threat of a move at 'a.'

Game Five: Sakata v. Kitani Minoru 2nd Strongest Player League

Sakata scored a decisive success in the 2nd Strongest Player tournament; with eight wins, one loss (to Takagawa), and one jigo (with Kitani), he finished well clear of the field. Kitani came second on 5-4-1, followed by Go Seigen on 5-5. The game below was Sakata's fourth in the league.

White: Kitani Minoru 9-dan

Black: Sakata Eio 9-dan

No komi. Played on 24, 25 December 1958.

Figure 1 (1 – 50)

At this time professionals were just starting to experiment with White 8, so there were no fixed patterns. The result to 28 seems fair for both. However, playing White 30 at 35 might have made better use of White's thickness.

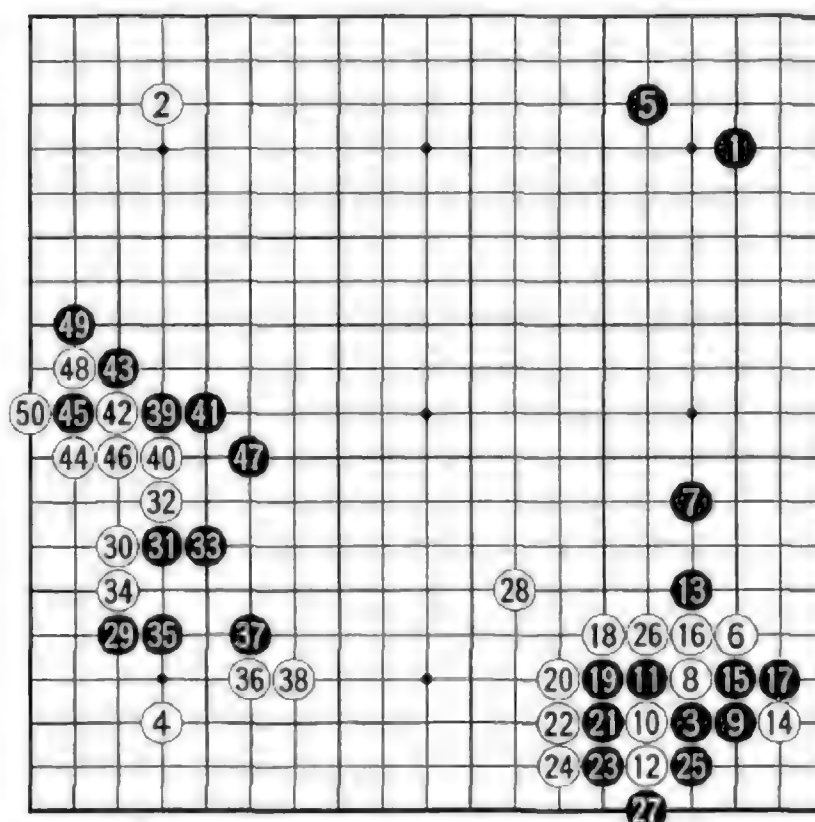


Figure (1 – 50)

Figure 2 (51 – 100)

White 78 is a typically stubborn Kitani move, but it is undeniably heavy; jumping out to 'a'

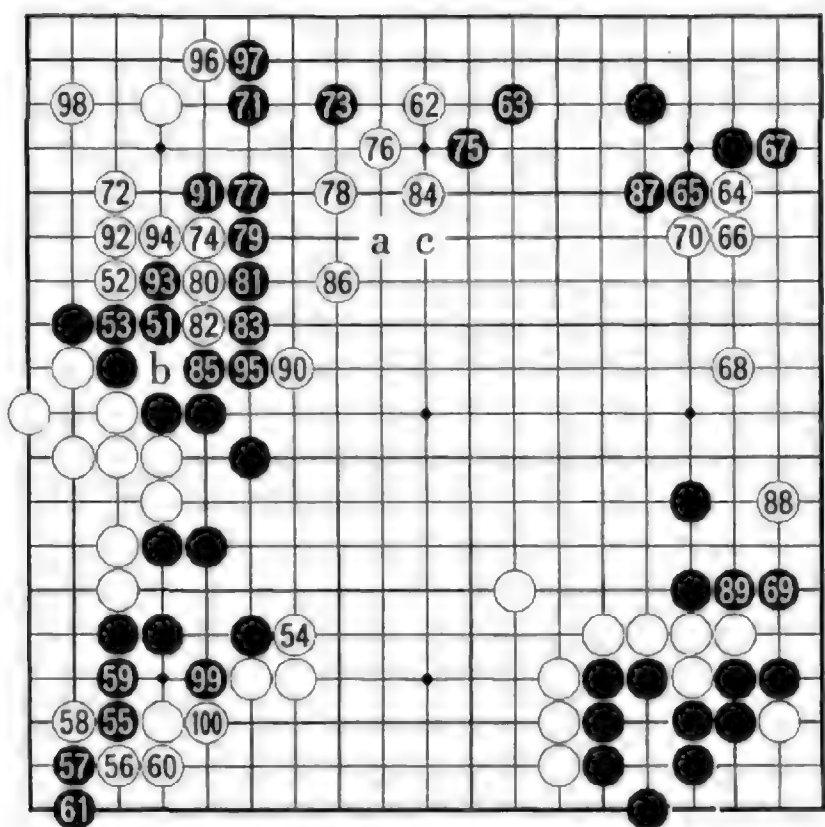


Figure 2 (51 - 100)

would be better. White is forced to take gote with 84. If instead he played White 85, then after Black 95-White 'b', Black 'c' would be unbearable.

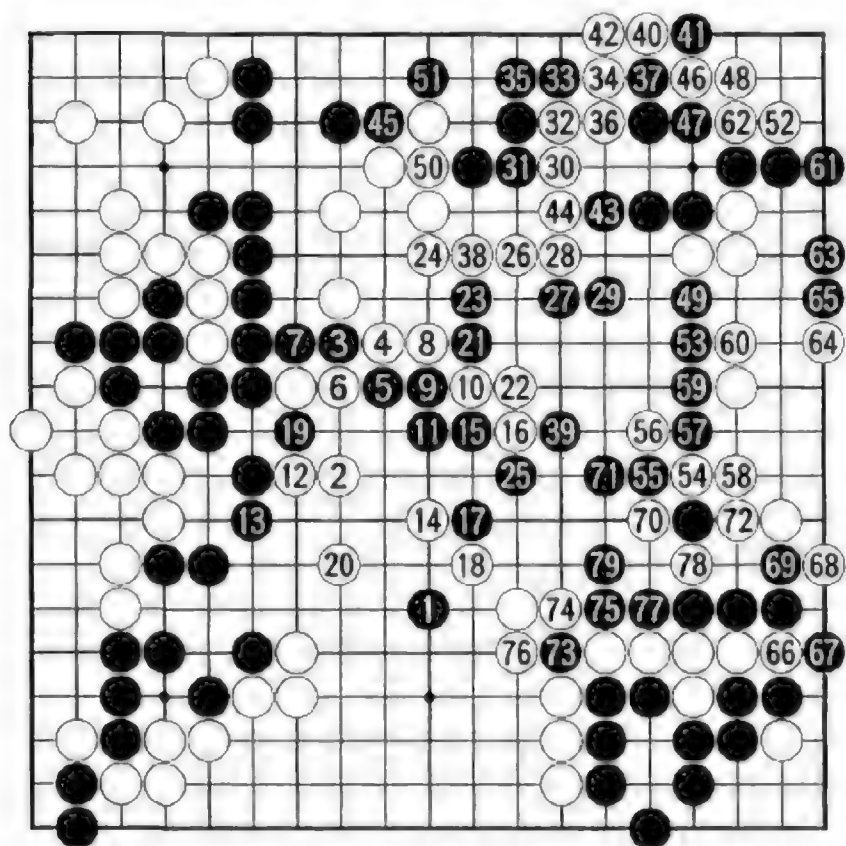


Figure 3 (101 - 179)

Figure 3 (101 - 179)

Black 1 is an overplay: Black should have exchanged Black 5 for White 8 before invading. White 2 is a good counter.

Black attacks desperately with 27 to 31. White 38 is a very bad move which lets Black destroy all the aji with 39. White should have played 38 at 40 - Black would not be able to cut at 38.

The process of securing eyes with 46 etc. weakens the white group on the right side. This



Sakata v. Kitani

is fatal.

White resigns after Black 179.

Game Six: Sakata v. Fujisawa Shuko 5th Top Position Title, Game Two

This title match was a triumph for Fujisawa Shuko, who later became one of Sakata's greatest rivals, but the second game was a masterpiece for Sakata.

White: Fujisawa Shuko 8-dan

Black: Sakata Eio 9-dan

No komi. Played on 8, 9 January 1960.

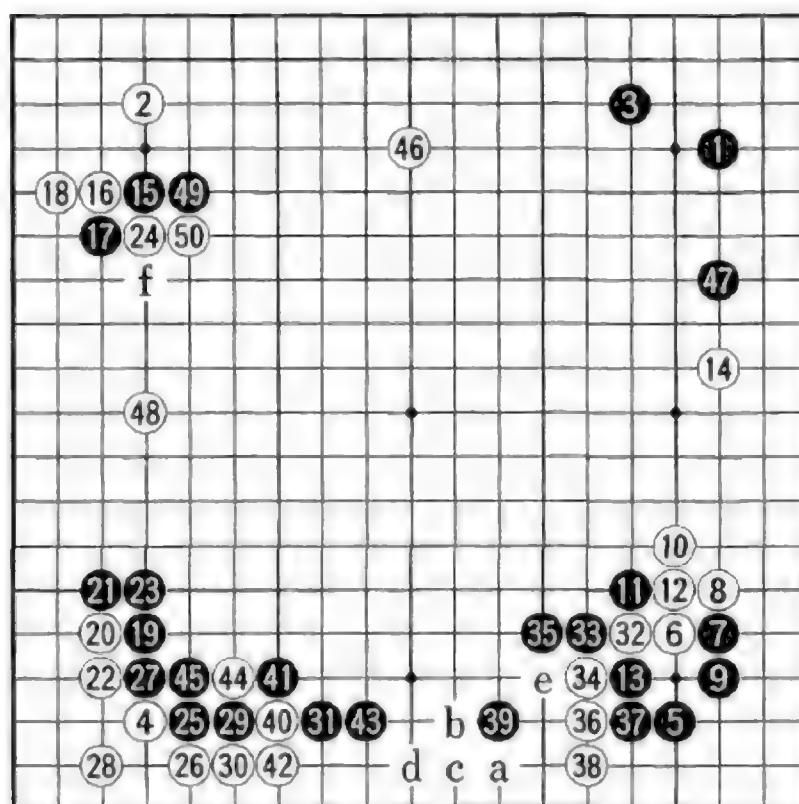


Figure 1 (1 - 50)

Figure 1 (1 - 50)

The sequence from 32 made the game difficult

for White. Shuko was surprised by 39. Ironically, he had studied this sequence and had even written about it in a book, but in this game he failed to take the presence of 31 into account. He had planned to play 40 at 'a,' but after Black 'b' and White 'c,' Black can block at 'd.' He had to change course with 40.

Black 43 leaves very bad aji (e.g. White 'b'): Black should secure the capture of the three stones with 'e.' Sakata: 'Thick moves like that never occur to me. I guess by nature I play a thin game.'

White 50 is heavy: White should extend down at 'f.'

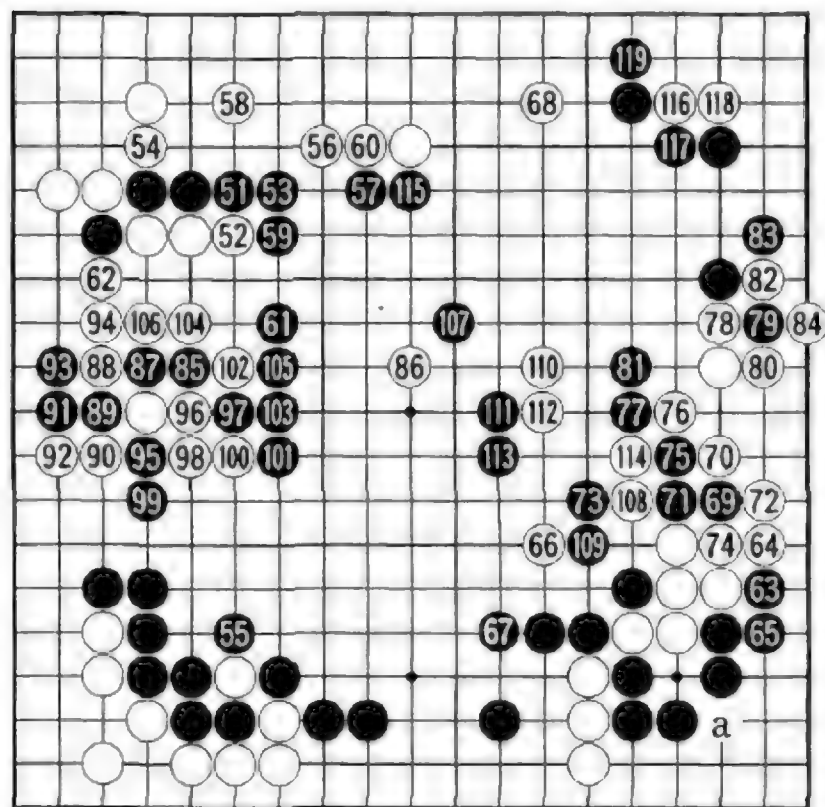


Figure 2 (51 - 119)

Figure 2 (51 - 119)

Black 55, taking care of Black's thinness, is the proper move (honte). Black 63 and 65 eliminate the aji of White 'a.' Shuko resigned himself to losing: he was now behind in both profit and thickness.

White 86 is a do-or-die move, but Black cuts it off with the brilliant sequence to 105.

White resigns after Black 119.

Game Seven: Sakata v. Kitani 3rd Strongest Player League

This game was Sakata's third in the league, in which he tied for first place with Go Seigen on 6-3-1. Sakata lost one game to Go Seigen and both his games with his old nemesis Hashimoto

Utarō. His jigo was with Hashimoto Shoji.

White: Kitani Minoru 9-dan

Black: Sakata Eio 9-dan

No komi. Played on 4, 5 May 1960.

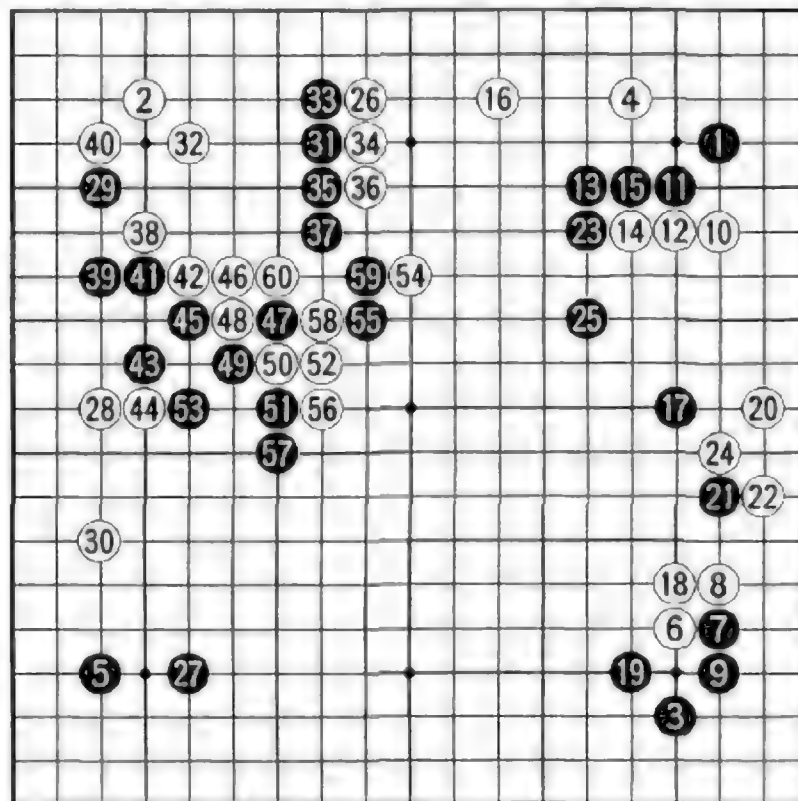


Figure 1 (1 - 60)

Figure 1 (1 - 60)

White's tenuki strategy with 10 is not a success: the result to 25 makes the game easy for Black.

White 54. Unfortunately for White, Black has a perfect counter at 55.

Figure 2 (61 - 123)

White tries desperately to turn the game

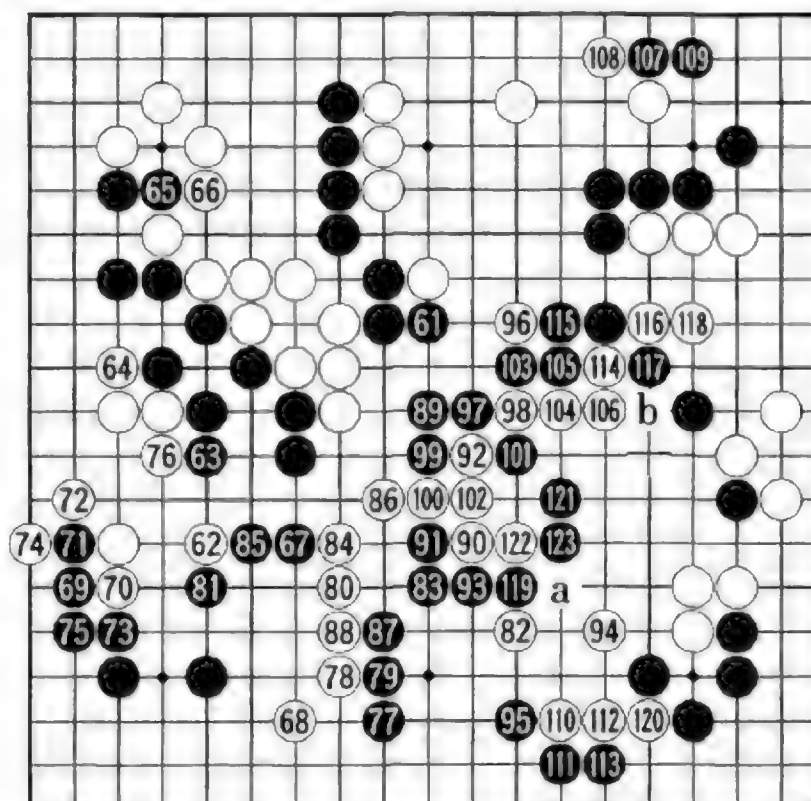


Figure 2 (61 - 123)

around with 82 and 92 to 96, but Black has no trouble extricating his group up to 105. White plays 120 to set the scene for resignation. If White 'a' after Black 123, then Black 'b.'

White resigns after Black 123.

Frustration in the Honinbo Tournament

With all the success I enjoyed in the second half of the 1950's, I still felt stifled and incomplete. In those days the Honinbo was the most prestigious and venerable title of them all. And for ten years I was edged into the shadows while Takagawa extended his record number of Honinbo titles.

As I watched from the sidelines my spirit was filled with melancholy at the dismal record I had compiled over the years. After losing in the title match to Hashimoto in 1951, the next year I was defeated by Takagawa in a play-off to decide the challenger. The same thing happened the next year as Kitani and I compiled identical 6-1 records and he won the play-off round. In 1954 I placed fifth and in 1955 third in the Honinbo league. The next two years I failed even to qualify for the league. In 1958 I was edged out yet again in a play-off, this time by Sugiuchi Masao 8-dan. I placed second in the 1959 and 1960 leagues.

All together, over the course of these ten years I lost six or seven good opportunities either to challenge for the Honinbo title or else to make the play-offs. As every league started, my name would be mentioned as the probable challenger. Then, when one failure followed on the heels of another, the tournament organizers and go journalists would shake their heads and declare with disgust, 'In this one arena Sakata is powerless.' Such comments hurt me deeply.

It was not enough to be viewed as the favorite every year; in order to demonstrate the credentials of a top player it was essential, considering both era and the elite lineage of the title, that one take one's place as Honinbo. Acutely aware of this, I would eagerly concentrate my energies toward achieving that goal every year. I have already written about the numerous tournament successes I won during those same years, but when I think back to that time I see that I was too intense, too self-consciously set on my own personal aims. Leaving aside the question of whether I was lucky or unlucky in

this tournament, the fact remains that to a remarkable degree I found that an excess of fighting spirit prevented me from following my usual game plan.

How could I overcome this fatal inability to win the games that counted? This was my most important task at this time.

Of course, I fully realize that I was unprepared psychologically for the challenge. Perhaps all men bred in a big city atmosphere are the same. When it comes down to the final step, one's nerves fail and one loses one's grip on the situation. For a go player that is the ultimate test: how does one train oneself mentally to deal with this kind of pressure?

In grappling with the problem, my old habit of putting my foot into my mouth manifested itself. This time it was a result of a tendency of mine those days to boast too much. I would immediately say anything that came to my mind, with few if any reservations, and, as might be expected, my reputation suffered as a result.

Bragging was an attempt to cover the sense of weakness that I felt; by using reverse psychology on myself, I tried to shore up my own belief in my abilities. Undoubtedly, many people were shocked at my disregard for the feelings of others and concluded that I was a loudmouthed, insensitive boor. But if my words and actions were indicative of one self-absorbed in his own activities, they also reflected a quest for self-understanding.

I touched off a controversy by stating in a magazine article that 'If Takagawa manages to hold on to his Honinbo title until the tenth term, at that point I will make my presence felt and stop him.' It was a statement made partly out of frustration, partly out of braggadocio and also partly from a need to spur myself on. If I should fail to accomplish what I said I would do, I would be exposed as a braggart unable to make good on his promises. I couldn't permit this.

The Long-awaited Challenge

During this period the go world was experiencing unprecedented growth and prosperity. In an attempt to internationalize the game, delegations of professional players were dispatched around the world, first to Taiwan, then to Europe and America. I too joined in the effort, touring China in 1960 with a group headed by the

late Segoe Kensaku. This was the first visit to China by Japanese professionals since the war.

My overall impression of the Chinese players at the time was that they were youthful and brimming with talent. If they could sharpen their skills against Japanese players, we might see the emergence of another Go Seigen or two and the Chinese go world would quickly reach the level of Japan's. I sincerely hoped that political ideology would be shunted aside (Japan and China had not yet restored formal diplomatic relations) and that the day when Japan and China would freely exchange cultural and go visits would come quickly.

The playing venues were splendid, and we were guided around several other facilities, but since I am not robust physically and the tour was made during the hottest time of the year, it was quite exhausting for me. I enjoyed the change of pace, though, since after my annual stumble in the Honinbo league I had also lost my Top Position title to Fujisawa Shuko.

Thanks to this trip, I returned to Japan refreshed and in good form and thereafter I enjoyed good results. I won the Top Position league with the score of 6-2 and then took revenge on Fujisawa by winning back the title. With the momentum I picked up from my success here, I approached the Honinbo league with confidence.

Kitani and I ended up with identical 6-1 scores and once again I found myself forced into a play-off game to decide the challenger for the Honinbo title. We played that game in April and it turned into a torturous trial for me.

Taking white, I faced one difficulty after another from the opening on. The battle spread from the right side into the centre as the white and black stones became embroiled in a violent confrontation. I waited in vain for a lucky break to come my way, and by the time we had reached the middle game I found myself wondering repeatedly whether I wasn't fighting in a lost cause. Indeed, I was resigned to the hopelessness of my position. But the feeling suddenly came over me that if I gave up here I would never become the challenger. With that thought spurring me on, I somehow rallied my spirits and played out the rest of the game in a detached, calm frame of mind.

Kitani also knew that he had the advantage,

but the situation was complicated: try as he might, he could not come up with the finishing blow. Perhaps at that point he became tired or frustrated. By then he was also in time trouble and in a double-edged position he made a fatal mistake. I had pulled off an upset, winning by $3\frac{1}{2}$ points. I was finally challenger for the Honinbo title.

It was a come-from-behind victory in a desperate situation that left a burning, indelible impression in my mind. By enduring, then prevailing, in this kind of precarious, cut-and-thrust battle I learned an invaluable lesson regarding tenacity and the art of winning critical games. I had won not only an important game but also an important psychological victory over myself. And this after ten long years . . .

Game Eight: Sakata v. Kitani 16th Honinbo League Playoff

White: Sakata Eio 9-dan

Black: Kitani Minoru 9-dan

Komi: $4\frac{1}{2}$; played on 21, 22 April 1961.

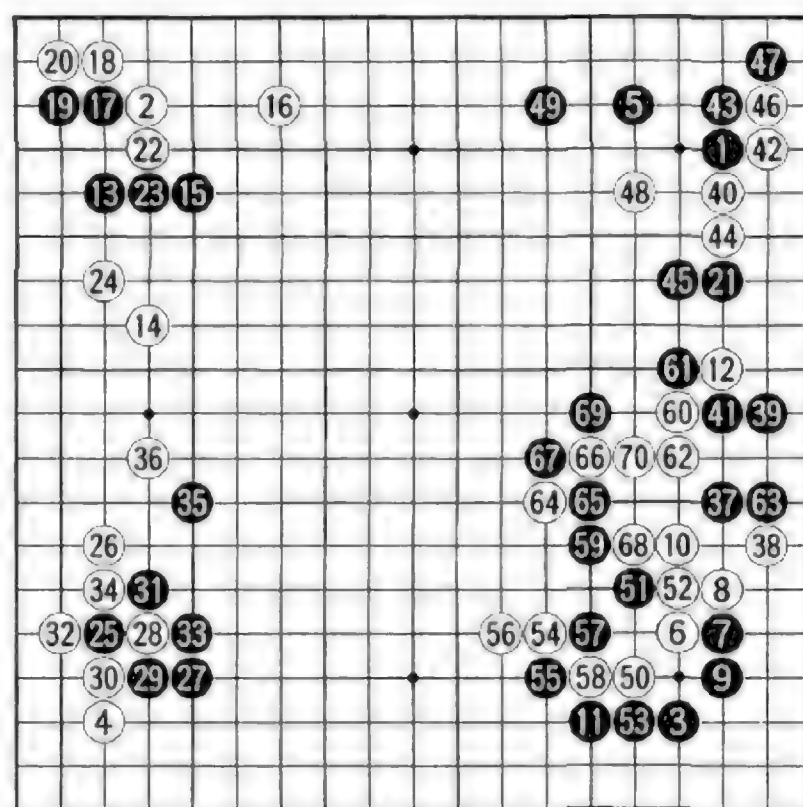


Figure 1 (1 - 70)

Figure 1 (1 - 70)

The complications start when Black ignores White's surprise attack at 40; creating two weak groups like this is a risky strategy. When White tries to lead out his bottom group, Black makes a severe attack with 55. White counters aggressively with 56, but Black's cut with 57 and 59 brings on his first crisis of the game.

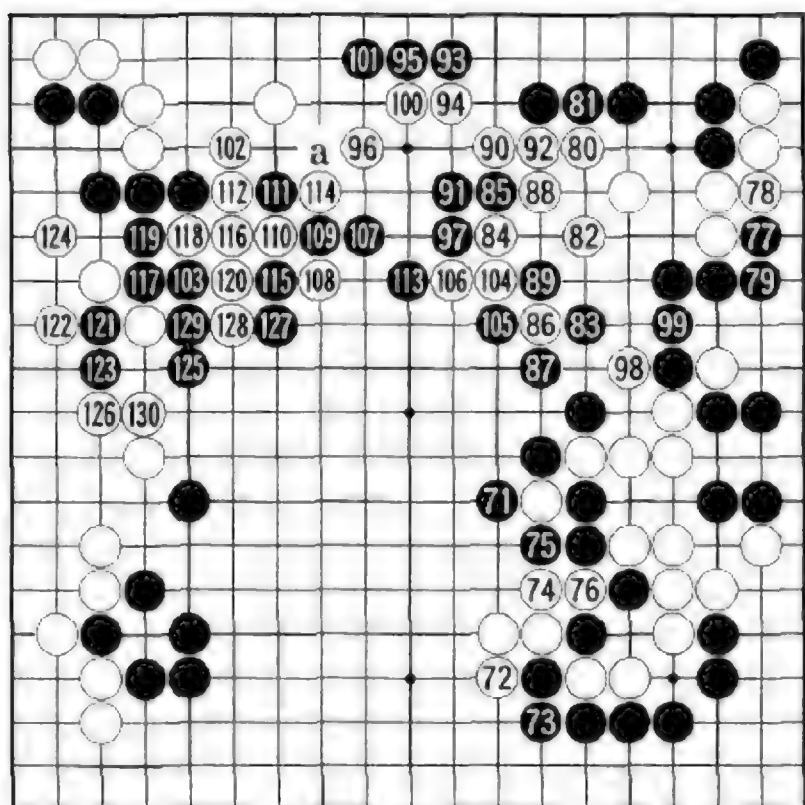


Figure 2 (71 - 130)

Figure 2 (71 - 130)

White 68 (Figure 1) is an exquisite shinogi tesuji: it enables Sakata to secure his endangered group up to 76.

Kitani turns his attention to the other weak group with 77, but Sakata also manages to rescue this up to 100.

White 104-108. White's aim is not just to set up a double attack on the top left group and the centre stones but also to forestall the threat of Black 'a.' He succeeds up to 114, so for the first time in the game Black is the one who comes under pressure.

Figure 3 (131 - 200)

The fight ends with 39. When White switches to

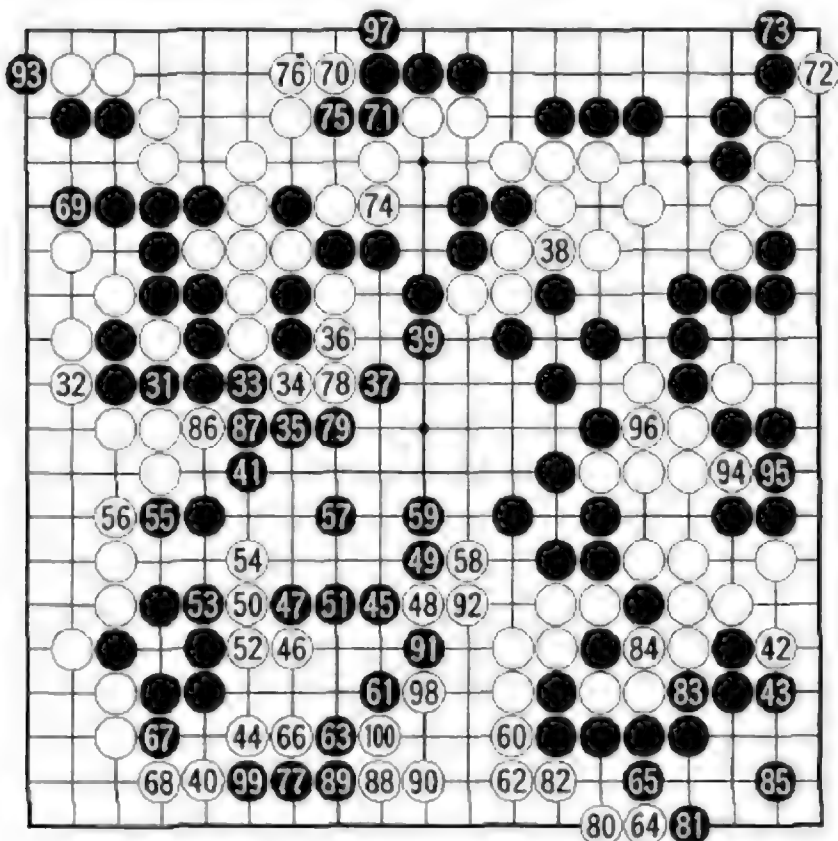


Figure 3 (131 - 200)

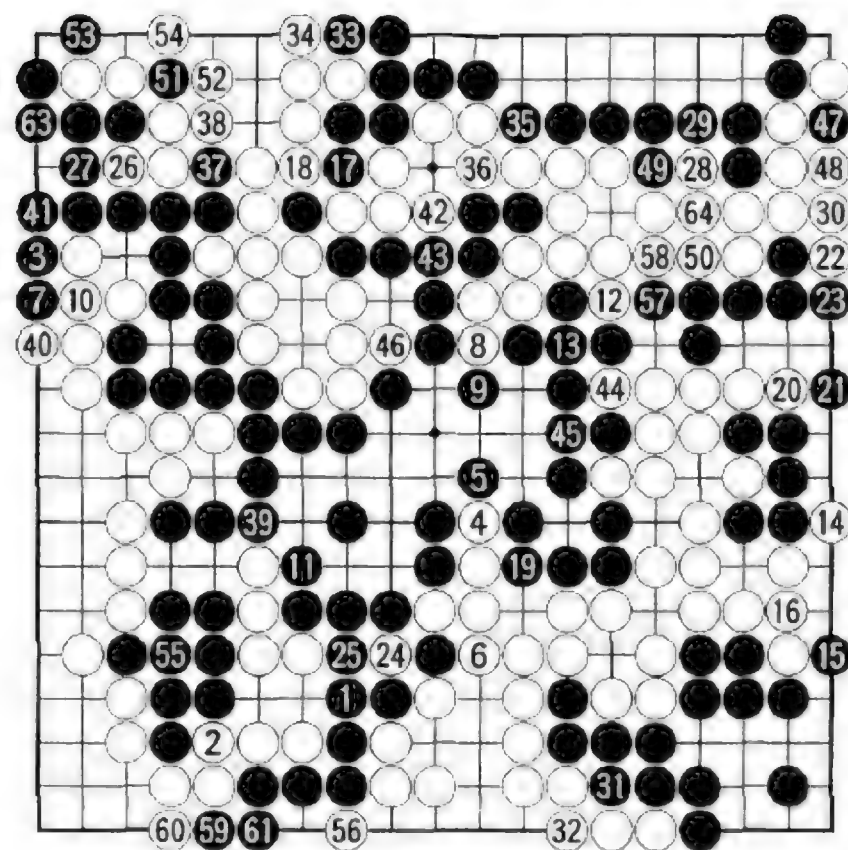


Figure 4 (201 - 264)
62: connects (left of 6)

40, he has taken the lead.

(This brief commentary, taken from the 1962 *Kido Yearbook*, does not identify the mistake referred to by Sakata on page 76.)

Figure 4 (201 - 264)

White wins by $3\frac{1}{2}$ points.

This concludes the story of the first part of Sakata's career. By the time he became the Honinbo challenger for the second time, Sakata had made a name for himself as one of the top two or three players of the day, but he was still on the verge of true greatness. It is in the second part of his career, the account of which will be given in GW51, that he established himself as one of the greatest players of all time.

This concluding instalment of the Sakata story will describe in detail his decisive encounters with the three great opponents of his career: Takagawa, Fujisawa Shuko, and Rin Kaiho. Sakata winds up his autobiography by giving his own analysis of his go style and his opinions on the game in general. To balance the record, we also give, in a final section entitled 'Sakata - From the Other Side of the Board,' assessments of Sakata by a number of important people in his life and career.

Count Pecorini's *The Game of Wei-chi*

Reviewed by Peter Shotwell

The book under review here is not generally available, but we hope that this review article gives some idea of its flavour. Readers interested in exploring it further may be able to find it in a major library. (Ed.)

The Game of Wei-Chi

By Count Daniele Pecorini and Tong Shu.

Introduction by H.A. Giles.

128 pages, 28 plates. Longmans, Green & Co., London, N.Y., Toronto, 1929

This book has been written with the object of introducing a fascinating game to the West, and with the hope that some day western players will rival and compete with the masters of the Far East.

These prophetic words were written in 1929 in a book which seems to have escaped previous notice by go writers. This is a pity, since it is the only one in English to use Chinese terminology, legends, and history to interest and teach the beginner. The anecdotal approach alone makes it worthwhile reading for the player of any level.

A game of Wei-Chi is symbolic of the gradual occupation of our planet by the human race . . . its sides are the coasts, washed by oceans and seas. The corners can be compared to islands or peninsulas. Those parts having a greater coastline are more easily defended.

The central part of the map corresponds to the centres of continents where the inhabitants have no outlet to the sea. . . . [In the beginning] men were few and the families or tribes had all the territory they desired without need for offensive or defensive action. They lived in a state of nature. . . . But with the multiplication of human beings began (the first struggles) for the appropriation of the best places along the rivers and sea coasts. As the game develops . . . and bases have been consolidated, advance to the interior is begun. . . . The occupation of (this) territory is rendered permanent by the formation of live masses.

When the war ends peace treaties are made. . . . All territories on the map are occupied. In one place we find large or small masses that have definitely won their territory, in another, masses living side by side respecting the rights of their neighbors whom they can never hope to dislodge. . . . We have not arrived, in our world, at the state of finality achieved at the end of a game of Wei-Chi.

A book from the Sung period (1200 A.D.) called *Chiching* by Chiang-i is also quoted from.

The players are divided into nine grades or 'hands'.

The first [and highest] grade is 'the spiritual state', as though the spirit of the player is supposed to wander on the map in a divine way.

The second hand is 'the giver of light'.

The third hand is 'the perfect state'.

The fourth is 'approaching the mystery'.

The fifth is 'intelligent'.

The sixth is 'clever'.

The seventh is 'strong'.

The eighth is 'of modest appearance'.

The ninth is 'humble'.

The first three hands are further classified as 'inspired' and 'gifted with inborn wisdom'.

The second three hands . . . knowledge has been 'acquired with assiduous study'.

The last three hands (who take only six stones from the first grade players) . . . are said to be on the way to perfection and are called 'suffering students', to give some idea of the continuous efforts they are making to bring their games to perfection.

The famous 'Ten Games of the West Lake' between Fan and Su in the late 18th century are commented on.

Fan-si-pin became the greatest Wei-Chi player that ever lived. . . . Su-ting-an, another great master of this time, often played with him. . . . The style of Fan, however, (was) much more brilliant and audacious than that of Su, who was a master of defense. A Chinese writer wrote that

Fan was like a winged horse which gallops over the clouds, devouring space, while Su was like a very reliable cob who never took a wrong step, . . . steady as a rock, all-foreseeing, all defending.

In the West Lake games, each player won five games (though Fan scored a few more points). They both happened to be born in the same town and lived to be very old.

When Fan died, the poet Yuan-Wei wrote a poem which was engraved over his tomb. 'Here lies the invincible Fan whose glory nobody could tarnish. Only the great Su could fight with him, but the sun would set over his moves of defense, while Fan, smiling and lighthearted, could exchange jokes with his friends, or go to sleep between moves of his opponent. Oh! great, generous soul, so good toward the needful, so indifferent to the powerful, your fame will never cease, and you will sleep in your glory under these pine trees soothed by the breeze.'

Unfortunately, the commentary on the one Fan-Su game presented is basically an explanation of Chinese terms for beginners; for example, a 'knot' is a ko, the 'great flying' or 'crane's step' is the large knight's move, 'knocking' is playing atari, 'blinding' and 'choking' are self-explanatory.

Another game included is Chou v. Huang, played in the 1660's, with a commentary by a 'clever player,' Wu-Shiu-Pu. Huang, incidentally, is famous for the legendary 'ten games of blood and tears,' which he played giving a three-stone handicap to his opponent instead of the normal two.

A third game presented without commentary is Fan v. Siao, a five-stone game which Fan won by 40 points. The authors also include parts of the first article in English on go by one of the first foreigners to appreciate the game. In 1877, Professor H.A. Giles wrote, 'To the beginner, a mere knowledge of the rules for a long time seems hopeless and subsequent application of them seems more hopeless still. The persevering ones alone play on day by day, until at last — suddenly, as it were — the great scheme of Wei-Chi dawns upon them in all its fullness and beauty and from that day they are ardent

enthusiasts in support of its unquestionable merits.'

It is unfortunate that more biographical information about the authors is not available in the book or elsewhere. Pecorini was an Italian, apparently from Rome, who was a high tax official for the British in China. He also wrote a non-go novel called *Japanese Maple*. About Tong Shu, I was unable to find anything. The book, too, is difficult to locate, being available in the United States only through inter-library loan.

Below we present the commentary on the Chou-Huang game mentioned above. We quote the commentary directly — the reader may find the terminology an interesting contrast to our standard commentaries. The only change we have made is the use of alphabetical notation for unplayed moves referred to in the text. The book uses the old Chinese system of dividing the board into four quadrants (clockwise from top left, they are: South or Shang, West or Chu, North or Zu, East or Ping. Move 'a' in Figure 1 is referred to as South 7/3 in the original. Note that the game starts with two white and two black stones already on the board, this being the traditional Chinese practice in even games, and that White moves first. Huang played with black. A modern commentary on this game, by Go Seigen, is given in "Go in China" in GW27, though note that the colours are reversed. (Ed.)

Comments of Wu-Hsiu-Pu on the Game of Chou v. Huang

This game has been chosen not only because it is an example of good style by two great masters, but also because it has been commented on by a clever player.

This game was played in the first years of the reign of Kang-Tsi (1662–1722), between Huang . . . and Chou, one of the best players of his time.

Figure 1 (1 – 50)

11. Regularly, white should play opposing black at 12.

12–18. Black rightly tries to keep the *first hand*.

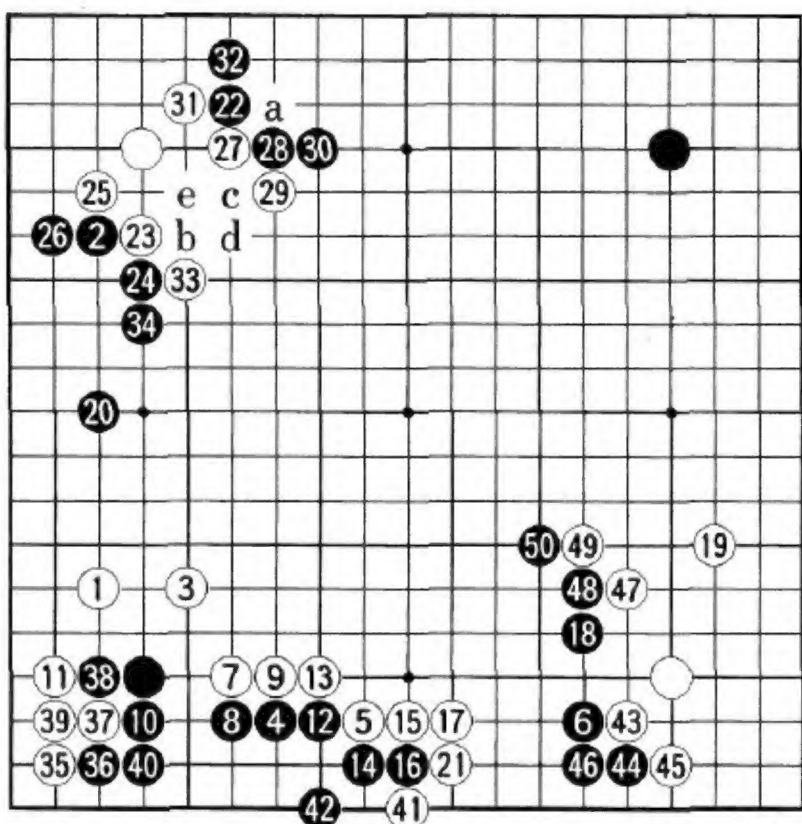


Figure 1 (1 - 50)

20. Good opening move.

21. This move could have been played later in the game, and, instead, 'a' might have been played to counteract the force of the preceding move and force black to *make a barrier* at 'b'.

27 and 29. Good moves.

32. A better move than *knocking* at 'c' because white would also *knock* at 'd'. In this case black would *take off* the man at 27, but white would *knock* at 'e'. Black would then be obliged to *connect* at 27 to his detriment.

34. A better move than *knocking* at 'b'.

35 and following moves. White is trying to gain possession of a part of the East corner [bottom left sector]. It seems, however, that black can, with move No. 38, create a *knot* unfavourable to the white forces.

41. *Closing Move*.—At the time when this game was played, it was customary to make some *closing moves* in advance, a thing not to be blamed.

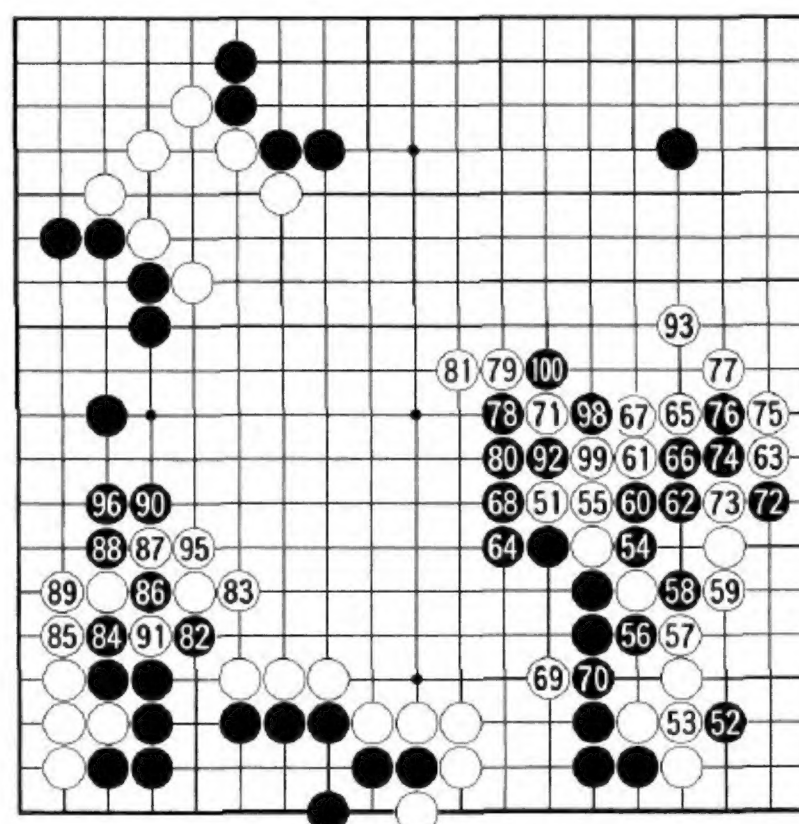


Figure 2 (51 - 100)
94, 97: ko

55, white makes a *stretching barrier*. This move is irregular, but is made with a far-seeing motive.

52-56. Black attacks the white corner at the right moment.

64. *Prolongs*.—A necessary move.

66-68. Excellent moves.

72-78. Natural and necessary moves.

80. A move of a very experienced player. Better than *prolonging* at 81.

81. *Prolongs*.—A very strong move.

93. *Opens a mouth* instead of rescuing the three men which have been *knocked*. A very good move.

99. *Connects* and rescues the three men. A very advantageous move which enables him to retain the *first hand*.

[The commentary continues until move 200, but we do not have enough space to give it here. Readers interested in the conclusion of the game are referred to GW27.]

Figure 2 (51 - 100)

51. Instead of prolonging the *knot* by playing

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